

News

Rea elected to his third term as Agri-Mark Chairman

N.Y. dairy farmer says the co-op will continue its work to increase farm prices and further expand its two farmer-owned brands

Methuen, Mass. -- New York dairy farmer Neal Rea of Cambridge, N.Y., was recently elected to his third term as Chairman of the Board of Agri-Mark at the January meeting of the dairy cooperative's Board of Directors.

Rea milks 190 cows on his 275 acre farm in Cambridge, located north of Albany, with his wife Carol, sons Thane, Travis and his wife Karen. Rea's family has been a member of Agri-Mark and its predecessor cooperatives for more than 65 years. Following his re-election as Chairman, Rea outlined the cooperative's plans for the immediate future.

"We are going to continue to be active in representing the unique legislative interests of our Northeast dairy farm families," says Rea. "I also look forward to working with other cooperative members for better farm prices and continued profit from our Cabot and McCadam brands of dairy products."

Rea says Agri-Mark will continue to strongly support the federal Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program and any other state or federal plan that will get money back on the farm to help compensate for increased milk production costs and the dismal price outlook for 2009. Rea is one of Agri-Mark's representatives to the National Milk Producers Federation, a coalition of the major dairy cooperatives in the U.S., and regularly visits Washington to lobby for higher farm milk prices.

Agri-Mark's Chairman is among the 14 dairy farmers from New England and New York who are elected by local members to serve on the cooperative's Board of Directors. Agri-Mark had a record year of profits in 2007 for its farmer-owners and 2008 is expected to be a near-record profit when the year-end results are reported in early March.

Agri-Mark farmers own both the Cabot (Vermont) and McCadam (New York) brands of Cheddar, Muenster and other dairy products. Both brands have won several national awards for their cheeses, including World's Best Cheddar and America's Best Cheese, respectively. In addition to their own products, Agri-Mark farmers also sell farm fresh milk and cream to many of the region's milk bottlers and dairy manufacturers throughout the Northeast.

During the elections of officers at the Agri-Mark Board of Director's meeting, dairy farmer Joe Greenbacker of Durham, Conn., was re-elected to the position of Agri-Mark Vice Chairman, while Mike Barnes of Mount Upton, N.Y., was re-elected Secretary. Walter Fletcher of Pittsfield, Maine was re-elected Treasurer. Dairy farmer Paul Percy of Stowe, Vt. was selected by the Board to join these officers to comprise the co-op's Executive Committee.