Agri-Mark is forecasting better farm milk prices for 2017

Economist says that though U.S. milk production is climbing, global output is down

Agri-Mark Economist Robert Wellington’s initial forecast of farm milk prices for 2017 sees them up, on average, $2.00 per hundredweight from the very low prices of 2016.

“Right now markets look better for 2017 than they were this year,” Wellington says. “But I do not expect that prices will be high enough to offset the losses that many dairy farmers will experience for 2016. Prices were below the cost of production for many Northeast farm families for most months, if not for every month of the year.”

Wellington says that milk production has slowed in the European Union (EU) and in major dairy exporting countries like New Zealand and Australia. However, U.S. production is still up slightly when comparing year to year numbers. Despite an excess amount of milk on the U.S. market, cheese prices have been relatively strong, which has been keeping farm prices up as well.

“We’ll see where markets go moving forward,” Wellington says. “The futures markets are now projecting farm prices in the $17 to $18 range for next year, but international markets could help bolster U.S. farm prices in 2017 just as quickly as they hurt them in 2016.”

More than 70 young farmers meet in Massachusetts for the YC Summer Conference

This year, the campus of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell was the setting for the Agri-Mark Young Cooperator (YC) Summer Leadership Conference.

Just over 70 young farmers attended the Conference in the last week of July. The two day conference included opportunities for YCs to interact with one another, the Cabot Marketing Team, Agri-Mark Senior Staff and the Board of Directors in addition to seeing and participating in presentations from industry experts.

YC Representative Amanda Freund practices her interview skills at Great Brook Farm during the YC Conference. Keith Kobland, Media Manager at Syracuse University, is behind the camera. He and Beth Meyer of ADADC produced an outstanding short video with interviews from the YC Conference.

(continued on page two)
Our Mission Statement

The purpose of the Insight is to recognize members for noteworthy accomplishments and to provide them with insightful news and information about Agri-Mark and the national and regional dairy industries.

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Agri-Mark Chairman Neal Rea gave an overview of the co-operative, emphasizing the importance of participation within the co-op. CEO Ed Townley provided the young farmers with a year-to-date progress report for Agri-Mark and participated in an open question and answer session with Chairman Rea.

"These young farmers really are the future of our co-operative. I am very impressed with the enthusiasm these members have for dairy farming and for their cooperative and their brands," says Rea. "The members of the Board of Directors also enjoy the opportunity to interact and share opinions and ideas on issues affecting our business and our industry."

Agri-Mark CEO Ed Townley was impressed with the knowledge many of the YCs already possessed and with the quality of questions from members of the group.

"It is obvious that many YCs are heavily involved in a family operation or are running a farm business on their own," says Townley. "They asked a lot of good questions about capital investments, equity, returns on investments and our relationships with other cooperatives. These are the same types of questions that also arise at our monthly Board meetings."

The part of the meeting that received the highest scores on attendee evaluation forms was a tour of Director Mark Duffy’s family farm in Carlisle, Mass. Great Brook State Park often has more than 100,000 visitors to their farm and adjacent ice cream stand each year. The YCs had the opportunity to tour the farm and see a recently built free-stall barn with 65 milking cows and one robotic milker. The Duffy family was the first dairy farm in the state to install a robotic milker and they were glad to share their experiences with the YCs.

Also present at Great Brook Farm was the Cabot Team that operates the Cabot Gratitude Grille, a food truck that travels the farm, featuring a variety of Cabot products.

"I was very pleased with this year’s turnout, engaging conversations and with the quality of presenters we had this year," says Nick Managan, YC Program Coordinator. "The conference offers incredible opportunities for YCs to connect with their peers, co-op leadership and industry experts. Our YC Officers and Board Advisors put a great deal of thought and effort into the planning and it’s always nice to see it pay off."

This year’s YC Officers are President Melissa Griffin of Sutton, Mass.; Vice President Nate Chittenden of Schodack Landing, N.Y.; and Secretary Sarah Bromley of Wallingford, Vt. The Advisors from the Board of Directors are Rob Wheeler of Wilmington, Vt.; Blake Gendebien of Ogdenburg, N.Y.; and Mark Duffy of Carlisle, Mass. 2015 YC President Melissa Jordan of West Greenwich, R.I. and 2015 Vice President Caleb Wright of Clinton, Maine were also instrumental in the conference planning. Samantha Whittier, YC Representative from Sutton, Mass., had positive feedback about the conference and the YC Program.

"It’s very obvious from the conversations during the conference that the YC Program is having a positive impact on our co-operative. The YC Program gives our young farmers a chance to share ideas, collaborate on ways to improve, bring out leaders, and connect with cooperative staff and directors," says Sam. "I thought the YC Conference was well organized, well attended, and very informative. We covered a wide range of topics with all lots of relevance. The farm tour and dinner at Great Brook Farm was exceptional - we are so fortunate to have such great members willing to host the YC Conference at their farm each year."

A first time attendee and this year’s Robert A. Jacquier Scholarship award winner, Emily Onus, said of the experience, “I really enjoyed the YC Conference. It was great getting to meet lots of other Agri-Mark farmers that share the same love of farming, and that have the same pride in what they do as my family. The conference was very informative, and helped provide me with some ideas to take back home for our open house and also gave us some great ideas to reach out to our community!"

In addition to the presentations and networking opportunities available each year, there were some noteworthy highlights:

• The first day of the conference provided an optional opportunity for YCs to volunteer as a group at the Boston Food Bank and take a historical tour of Boston in the famous ‘Duck Boats,’ WWII era vehicles that are able to travel on both land and water. This provided an opportunity for YCs to get to know one another, learn about Boston’s incredible history and do some great work for the community.

• YCs were able to assist Super Bowl Champion and former New England Patriot, Jermaine Wig- gins, who shared his experience in promoting dairy with thousands of children through the Fuel Up To Play 60 program."

• The filmmakers behind ‘Forgotten Farms’ (forgottenfarms.org) joined us to screen their film during the conference. Several member families are featured in the documentary including Steve Barstow, Louis Corse, Stephen and Linda McCray, Jim Larkin, Travis Whitcomb and Ed Carter, Warren Facey, Victor Ziemba, Darryl, Lucinda and Jackson Williams, Lois and Jane Escobar and N.H. Commissioner of Agriculture, Lorraine Merrill. Agri-Mark Economist Bob Wellington is also included in the film.

Work is already underway to plan the 2017 YC Leadership Conference and more details will be available soon.

YC Summer Conference...(continued from front page)
Four new, larger cheese vats are installed at the co-op’s Chateaugay cheese facility

Equipment needs replacing over time, and this was certainly the case with the cheese vats that were recently replaced at Chateaugay.

“We did the best we could to weld them up and keep them going, but it was time to replace them,” says plant manager Henry Mapes. “Very high quality cheese is our trademark and the new vats are slightly larger than our old ones, more energy efficient and will allow us to make the type of cheese we want on an even more consistent basis.”

The new vats hold 55,000 pounds of milk each, up 5,000 pounds per vat from the old ones. This will also allow Agri-Mark to handle 100,000 more pounds of member milk at this facility on a daily basis.

“This project is one that had to be done and also gave us the opportunity to upgrade the size of the vats,” says Ed Foslat, Senior V.P. of Plant Operations.

“The new vats are installed in the facility while the old vats are still running, allowing the cheesemakers to make cheese, age it and then test it to make sure it is up to the co-op’s standards.”

“There are 26 monitor screens on these new vats, so they produce a lot of information that the cheesemakers just love,” says Tony Green, Chateaugay Maintenance Manager. “I thought they might be intimidated by all of the new technology, but they are all really embracing it because they know it will help them make even more consistent award-winning cheese over time.”

Four new cheese vats, including the two shown above, were recently installed at the co-op’s Chateaugay cheese plant. The new vats are larger and will allow Agri-Mark to continue to make award-winning cheeses at that facility.

One unique aspect about these vats are the side manhole covers which further help to prevent anything from falling into the vat, but more importantly, they enhance visibility and allow the cheesemaker to see all of the curd in the entire vat. One is shown in the first photo to the right of the computer screen in the photo. The vats also have fluted tops, shown in the center photo, to accommodate the side manhole. The photo to the right shows milk cooking in a new vat.

Board continues to explore ways to increase plant capacity

In addition to the normal monthly reports by CEO Ed Townley and his staff to the Agri-Mark Board of Directors, other issues were discussed at the August 2016 meeting of the Board, including the following items that have been taken from the minutes of that meeting:

- At the August meeting Chairman Rea reported on his activities during the past month, one being a meeting he attended at the invitation of Richard Ball, New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets, to discuss the state of the dairy industry in New York. He also reported on the recent settlement agreement in the class action lawsuit in California pertaining to CWT and National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF). Chairman Rea also reviewed the Board meeting schedule for 2017 and the NMPF annual meeting coming up in October.
- CEO Ed Townley reported on July’s performance which was very positive. The key factors driving the improvements were less extra milk (heat and increased milk sales) and expanded throughput in our plants and very little condensed skim. He forecasted that we should remain this way for the rest of the year excluding holiday milk. He also reported that August would be a good month.
- Economist Bob Wellington gave the economics report, showing milk production up just over 1% nationally and production increases down slightly in the mid-west. New York State remains as one of the highest growth states. Cold storage stocks of butter are up 51% over last year and cheese up 10%. U.S. dairy exports at 13.3% of national production which is down from last year at 14.5%. Bob’s outlook for the fall was good news as the price forecast showed members milk price rising through the fall and a slightly higher average for next year.
- Bob Stoddart, Agri-Mark’s Membership Manager, gave the membership report of which 1 new member was approved, there was 1 resumption and 12 members went out of business for the month which brings member count to 1065. He reviewed the fall regional meeting schedule with the Board and there were no changes.
- Matt Hendricks, the co-op’s Chief Financial Officer, gave the July finance report showing a profit for the month created by a variety of favorable factors: the co-op had very little excess milk; Branded sales (especially butter in July) remain very good; spending throughout the organization is well controlled and the butter hedging program performed as was predicted. He indicated that whey prices were inching up slowly, which has not happened for quite some time.
- Tim Opper, V.P. of Manufacturing, reported on a possible dryer expansion at the co-op’s West Springfield, Mass., plant to allow more capacity and the capability to produce some value-added powder. Tim and his staff will continue to pursue this possibility and report back to the Board with options at the September Board of Director’s meeting.
Welcome Stock Farm harnesses hot water from the sun

Welcome Stock Farm of Schuylerville, N.Y., is known for having very good cows and for being a top-notch, innovative dairy operation. So when the opportunity came in 2014 to install solar panels at a good price to preheat hot water for the dairy barn, the family took advantage of it.

The family was building a new barn and qualified for grant money for the solar hot water system, mostly with financial backing from NYSDERA, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. The total cost of the installation was $50,000, but the Pecks had to pay only a very small portion of that bill.

“We use a lot of hot water to clean equipment properly,” says Neil Peck, who farms with his father William and brother Bill. “So when we had the opportunity to install panels with that much financial help from NYSDERA, we went for it,” he says. “I am very glad we made the investment as it paid for itself in less than a year.”

Well water is pumped from the ground and slightly preheated by running it side by side with hot freon coming from the milk tank compressors. Then that water is pumped to the solar panels, heated from the sun, and pumped to two 265 gallon storage tanks. As water is needed on the farm, it goes from the storage tanks to the boilers to bring the water up to the correct temperature needed.

On a normal day, the solar panels put water into the storage tanks at between 115 degrees and 120 degrees. During hot summer days, that can rise to 125 or 130 degrees, dropping down in the winter to just over 100 degrees.

“One wash cycle in the parlor uses 200 gallons of 180 degree water,” Neil says. “For some applications, it only has to be about 130 degrees, but we want to have plenty of hot water to make sure our milking equipment is cleaning properly.”

Neil is currently exploring other energy saving projects for his family’s farm, including replacing present lighting with LED lighting and the installation of more efficient barn fans or even variable speed, low energy cooling fans.

Members of Agri-Mark’s Sustainable Farms Committee

Agri-Mark’s Sustainable Farms Committee includes several sustainability projects

While Agri-Mark members have been busy with sustainability projects on the farm, the co-op has been busy with energy and money saving projects as well, including the ones below. We will provide more information about some of these money-saving projects in future issues!

- Middlebury, Vt. – Energy Efficiency: modifications to VFD, ammonia systems resulting in expected savings around $40K/year
- West Springfield, Mass. - Organics victory: diversion of organics from municipal sewer (7 million pounds to 250 thousand pounds) Recycling: reviewing proposals for a recycling program; potential savings up to $6K/year
- Cabot/Distribution Center, Cabot and Montpellier - Kiek the Cup Campaign; reusable mugs vs. disposable cups; potential savings - $7K/year
- Chateaugay, N.Y. - Composting: successful efforts to divert cheese from landfill.
- The Montpellier, Vt., Distribution Center is piloting a solar panel that will be placed on top of our cheese trucks.
Agri-Mark SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

What is Agri-Mark’s Sustainable Farms Committee all about?
This 15-member Board Advisory Committee was established in 2012

The Sustainable Farms Committee (SUSFAC) is a standing advisory committee to the Agri-Mark Board of Directors that was established in 2012. It is comprised of 15 Agri-Mark members and two members of the co-op’s management staff that are appointed by the Board.

Two key members of management that support the Committee are Jed Davis, Agri-Mark’s Director of Sustainability and Ann Hoogenboom, Sustainability Coordinator.

“Major customers have asked and will continue to ask many questions about sustainability at our plants and on our farms,” says Davis. “We have great stories to share about continuous improvement and our efforts to better manage our impacts. The sustainability award that we won earlier this year demonstrates to our customers the commitment we have made.”

“There are three important parts to sustainability: economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. All three need to be addressed and aligned if an organization, whether a small or large agricultural business, wishes to achieve true sustainability. All three need to be addressed and aligned if an organization, whether a small or large agricultural business, wishes to achieve true sustainability.”

“The whole concept of sustainability gives us a great opportunity to take advantage of the many stewardship farming practices that our members are already undertaking on their farms,” says Neal Rea, Agri-Mark Chairman of the Board. “Our SUSFAC gives feedback to the Board on different trends and opportunities that may benefit all members, large or small.”

Rea notes that the FARM Program will have some new questions regarding sustainability in 2017. Agri-Mark’s field reps will soon receive additional training in this area. Agri-Mark has developed a voluntary Vital Capital Index (see below) for those members with a deeper interest in sustainability.

Agri-Mark will continue to test its Vital Capital Index with member farms in 2017

A whole host of interested parties – Agri-Mark members, consumers, maybe even your neighbors – are now more regularly asking questions about the sustainability practices on dairy farms. How do you answer them? Agri-Mark and Manomet have a tool to help!

Andy Whitman from Manomet, a science-based environmental non-profit that partners with Agri-Mark, is the project leader on the Vital Capital Index for Dairy Agriculture, or VCI.

Andy notes, “This fully-developed tool is migrating online and will serve several key goals.” These goals include:

• Necessary customer information: anonymous, aggregated information that is being requested of the co-op by key customers.
• Progress indicators: a map for continuous improvement in key sustainability areas
• Identifying savings: opportunities to realize efficiencies from farm practices
• Benchmarking: comparative, anonymous information on performance levels by peer farms
• Communications: information available to use for communicating your own farm’s performance.

Although dairy farmers face many of the sustainability challenges posed by all animal agriculture, dairy farmers have great opportunities to reduce impacts and costs by closing the ecological loop of feed, milk and fertilizer.

Agri-Mark’s brands have already benefited greatly from work done using earlier versions of the VCI. Nearly all Agri-Mark farmers completed the first module of the VCI back in 2014. That information, at a co-op level, has led to accolades from key customers in both our retail and ingredient businesses.

The VCI is unique in that it was developed starting with dairy farmer input, rather than top-down mandates from others. The VCI has twelve key topics that relate to four modules. The four modules are: Awareness, Practice, Performance, Sustainability. All twelve topics are linked to sustainability’s triple bottom line, characterized here as People, Planet and Profit.

The topics (such as economic resiliency; water conservation; waste management; labor practices; soil health, etc.) align to farmers’ needs, stakeholder mandates from others. The VCI has twelve key topics that relate to four modules. The four modules are: Awareness, Practice, Performance, Sustainability. All twelve topics are linked to sustainability’s triple bottom line, characterized here as People, Planet and Profit.

“The VCI approach recognizes farmers for the good things that they may already be doing and is set up to encourage farmers to set their own practical sustainability goals.”

The VCI focuses on both outcome-based and practice-based indicators related to sustainability. Outcome-based indicators describe the current condition of a stewardship topic (e.g., nutrient management) and help farmers identify opportunities for improvement that might reduce costs or increase efficiencies. Practice-based indicators make it easy for farmers to self-evaluate and benchmark their farms practices compared to other farms, without being prescriptive.

Both help farmers identify ways to improve the sustainability of their farms.

Continuous improvement is key. Many sustainability efforts focus too much on the sustainability goal without thinking about how to get there. The VCI approach recognizes farmers for the good things that they may already be doing and is set up to encourage farmers to set their own practical sustainability goals.

Converting the entire VCI for electronic use (via computer, tablet, mobile phone, etc.) will be completed in the next several months. In 2017 we will focus on a subset of about two dozen questions that are of most importance to our customers. Plus we hope that Agri-Mark farmers, led by a handful of our pilot farms who have helped throughout in the development of the VCI, will kick the tires and explore how the VCI may be useful for your farm.

“Our goal is ultimately one of richer conversations based on dairy farm realities,” says Jed Davis, Agri-Mark’s Director of Sustainability. “Fewer and fewer of our customers, consumers, neighbors and government officials have first-hand experience on any kind of farm. The Vital Capital Index is a tool intended to share understanding among interested stakeholders, while providing useful farm management information related to sustainability.”

The VCI has been developed as an Agri-Mark/Manomet collaboration. The VCI has received financial support and input from the dairy industry through the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy and Dairy Management Inc., as well as other grants.

Agri-Mark Sustainable Farms Committee (SUSFAC) Vision / Mission / Goals November 1, 2014

DESCRIPTION
SUSFAC is a standing committee sanctioned by the Agri-Mark Board that is appointed for advisory purposes on matters of Farm-side Sustainability issues and efforts.

VISION
SUSFAC serves to realize an understanding of sustainability that enables our members and their cooperative to pursue stewardship of vital capital resources and stakeholder well-being in ways that create new opportunities while addressing risks and impacts.

MISSION
SUSFAC advises membership, the Board and management on important topics of sustainability in dairy agriculture, using an approach grounded in stakeholder well-being, vital capital and the Triple Bottom Line – covering economic, social and environmental impacts.

GOALS
SUSFAC pursues two primary goals:

• Education
  • To educate ourselves and our stakeholders on key issues and topics of sustainability
  • To increase awareness and understanding and familiarity with key sustainability tools
• Advocacy
  • To be ambassadors, internally and externally, for sustainability.
  • To promote the wise stewardship of vital capitals and sharing of best practices.

GARY REA/BRIAN HURST, SUSFAC VICE CHAIR AND CHAIR PERSONALLY know of the critical importance of taking care of the resources on which we depend to put food on the table, and the manure on which we rely for our livelihood. As dairy farmers, we are well aware that our resources are finite, and we are responsible for using them in a way that is wise, responsible and productive.

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The new GMO labeling bill - what does it do for dairy?

Passage of Food Biotech Labeling Bill on Capitol Hill Signals New Focus in GMO Debate

Chaos in the food supply chain has been avoided with Congress’ recent passage of the federal food biotechnology label disclosure law. For more than two years, the dairy industry — along with hundreds of other food and agriculture organizations — worked tirelessly to ensure that one consistent, unified and common-sense standard be applied to labeling requirements for foods produced with biotechnology.

Finding a Compromise on Capitol Hill

After initially losing a vote on the issue in the Senate last March, leaders of the coalition supporting federal preemption of state GMO labeling went back to work to build support for a compromise alternative. A bipartisan majority of 63 senators agreed in early July on a new measure, negotiated by Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Sen. Pat Roberts and the committee’s ranking member, Sen. Debbie Stabenow. Their bill creates a national, mandatory system to disclose the use of biotech ingredients.

The bill, which subsequently passed the House of Representatives on July 14 and was signed into law by President Obama, preempts state GMO labeling laws, such as the one in Vermont that took effect July 1. The adoption of this measure is the culmination of extensive efforts by the National Milk Producers Federation and its members to establish a reasonable, nationwide standard for how information about food biotechnology should be shared.

“We want to thank the Congress for their efforts to pass this legislation because the country needs a national approach on this issue, not a patchwork quilt of differing state laws,” said NMPF President and CEO Jim Mulhern.

In addition to providing federal preemption of state GMO labeling, the new law stipulates that products with ingredients made with biotechnology should disclose this information through one of three methods: displaying text or a symbol directly on the packaging; featuring a Quick Reader (QR) code that can be scanned by a smartphone; or offering a toll-free phone number or a link to a website where consumers access more information.

Key Issues for Dairy

As the bill was negotiated in the Senate, NMPF argued strongly that milk and meat from animals that consume feed grown from biotech seeds should not be subject to the labeling provisions. The final measure prohibits a food from being considered bioengineered solely because it came from an animal derived from biotechnology,” he said.

This provision is similar to how other countries, including European nations, treat milk from cattle that may be fed GMO grains.

Continued Engagement Needed

The next step in the process is the development of regulations by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on how food companies must implement the provisions of the new law. The USDA will spend the next two years working on a regulatory system to address the finer points of the law, such as the exact wording to be used on any label disclosures; any thresholds above or below which a biotech ingredient may not have to be disclosed; and how biotech enzymes and processing aids are handled.

“Through National Milk, Agri-Mark will be very engaged in the rule-making process to ensure that dairy’s interests continue to be safeguarded,” says Ed Townley, Agri-Mark CEO. “We will also continue to work with our customers to help them determine if any dairy products fall under pending disclosure requirements and, if so, how to best meet those requirements.”

Some companies will use the SmartLabel™ digital technology that allows consumers to pull up detailed information on a retail food product. This could be an opportunity for dairy brands to also discuss their other proactive efforts around food safety, animal care, environmental stewardship, and more.

Most critically, the rule-making process allows the dairy community the time it needs to strengthen consumer communications efforts around foods produced with biotechnology. The check-off funded Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy has established a special taskforce dedicated to communications around biotech foods.

From NMPF’s point of view, now that the dairy industry has achieved a victory by establishing a national labeling system, “we can begin moving beyond specious arguments over labels, terminology and absence claims, and work to address real food safety and nutrition issues, and further the sustainability of our food system,” according to Mulhern.
Crisis Planning Initiative

Representatives have gathered updated phone numbers and email addresses for members. In the event of a tornado, plant closing, regional radiation leak, foot and mouth disease outbreak, etc., we need to contact as many members as quickly as possible. An updated computer with access to email can help with this effort. Thank you to all members who worked with their field rep to have their contact information updated.

Other Loans Available

In addition, through the Agri-Mark Member Loan Program, a member can borrow up to the average net amount of their last monthly milk check (gross income less assignments and marketing expenses) for the purchase of a barn fan(s), bulk tank, bulk tank washer, compressor, farm computer, farm generator, milking equipment, pipeline washer, preconditioner, water heater, or vacuum pump.

Members should contact Lorrie Curtis at Agri-Mark’s Andover, Mass. office (800-225-0532 extension 5560) for information concerning specific expenses for the purchase of a barn fan(s), bulk tank, bulk tank washer, compressor, farm computer, farm generator, milking equipment, pipeline washer, preconditioner, water heater, or vacuum pump.

Members should contact Lorrie Curtis at Agri-Mark’s Andover, Mass. office (800-225-0532 extension 5560) for information concerning specific payment amounts and funds available to them.

Following are the steps to follow if you would like to participate in the loan program:

1. Obtain a loan application by either contacting the Membership Department at the Andover office (800-225-0532 extension 5560) and request a loan application or download a loan application form from www.agrimark.coop.

2. Complete the loan application and return it to Agri-Mark’s Membership Department for review and approval. You may return the completed loan application in one of three ways:
   - Fax to 978-552-5578
   - Scanning and emailing to lcurris@agrimark.net
   - U.S. Mail to: Agri-Mark, Inc., Attn. Lorrie Curtis, P.O. Box 5800, Lawrence, MA 01842.

3. Once the loan application is approved, you will receive a Promissory Note outlining the details of the loan and the payment schedule. It is agreed in the loan form that the entire remaining debt and unpaid interest will be deducted from the last milk check should you discontinue shipping milk to Agri-Mark.

4. Once the Membership Department receives the signed Promissory Note/Loan Agreement, a check will be mailed to you (made payable to the vendor). Please contact the Membership Department with any questions -- they will be happy to serve you!

Connecticut and New York members hold fund-raisers for Congresswomen Elizabeth Esty and Elise Stefanik

U.S. Representative Elizabeth Esty of Connecticut’s 5th District enjoyed a light moment at the Jacquier Farm in East Canaan, Conn. with Agri-Mark Director James Jacquier. More than 40 members, milk haulers and local citizens turned out for a Sunday afternoon meeting with Congresswoman Esty who played an important role in helping to increase milk truck weight limits in Connecticut and other states. Jacquier presented Esty with a check for $1,000 from Agri-Mark for her re-election campaign. According to Jacquier, “Working with Congresswoman Esty has given me a great appreciation for her willingness to listen to her constituents and then take action on their behalf. That is how democracy is supposed to work and how it did work over the past few years as we worked on a new Transportation Bill together. I applaud her efforts and hope other members will support her as well.”

U.S. Representative Elise Stefanik of New York’s 21st District visited the Hanehan Dairy in Saratoga Springs in early August. Shown left to right are Charles Hanehan, Congresswoman Stefanik, Cliff Hanehan and Agri-Mark Chairman Neal Rea. Following a short farm tour, a reception was held at the Hanehan’s home. Several members, local politicians and industry representatives met and chatted with Stefanik on a variety of issues, including the challenges of low milk prices, GMO labeling and the investments the cooperative is making in Chateaugay facility, which is within Stefanik’s district. Neal Rea also presented the Congresswoman with a check for $1,000 towards her re-election. “We need to support those legislators who help support our industry and I am proud to support Congresswoman Stefanik for all of the work she has done to help dairy farmers,” says Rea.
Member Recipe! Breakfast Sausage Casserole

There’s nothing quite like a hearty breakfast, and our sausage casserole recipe is filling and absolutely delicious—it’s what we like to call an authentic farm family recipe! A sausage casserole is simple to make, and you can cook it up quickly too.

The recipe, which serves eight, uses basic pantry staples like bread, sausage, and cheddar cheese—we recommend using Cabot’s Seriously Sharp Cheddar. The dish saves well so you can snack on the leftovers for a good long while. Do you know a family member or a friend who might like to try our delicious sausage casserole? If so, please feel free to share the recipe with your friends and family on Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter. We’re positive that they’re going to love it!

Ingredients:
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 4 slices whole-grain or white bread
- 1 pound bulk sausage, browned and drained
- 6 large eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 ounces Cabot Seriously Sharp Cheddar, grated (about 1 cup)

Directions:
• Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat 8-by-10-inch or similar-sized baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
• Tear bread into small pieces and scatter over bottom of dish. Top with sausage.
• In medium bowl, whisk eggs until combined; whisk in milk, mustard, salt and pepper. Pour over bread and sausage. Sprinkle cheese over top.
• Bake uncovered for 35 to 45 minutes or until set all the way to center (knife inserted in center comes out clean).

Recipe courtesy of Wheeler Farm, Wilmington, Vermont, one of the 1,100 farm families who own Cabot Creamery Cooperative.

Cabot and McCadam cheeses win several awards at the American Cheese Society Contest

Cabot Old School Cheddar and McCadam Muenster take first place

Cabot Creamery and McCadam Cheese have been recognized with some high honors from the American Cheese Society Contest that was held in August.

This is a highly competitive event with more than 1,800 entries from 260 different companies. Many of the competitors are small artisan specialty manufacturers.

“When you consider that Agri-Mark makes 140 million pounds of cheese every year, it makes it very difficult for anyone our size to compete with many of the smaller competitors,” says Ed Townely, Agri-Mark CEO. “That is why it is also extremely rewarding to win against this tough competition. It is a testament to the members that supply the high quality milk and the many talented employees that turn that milk into award-winning dairy products. Everyone throughout our co-op can be proud of the role they play to make these awards happen.”

Cabot products took home a total of seven different awards. Leading the way were a five year “Old School” Cheddar and McCadam’s Muenster taking first place. Complete award results and the name of the co-op cheese maker that was responsible for production of the cheese that was submitted for the competition are below.

2016 ACS Judging & Competition – Winners

Mature Cheddar - aged over 24 and up to 48 months - all milks
3rd Cabot 3 Year Old Cheddar
Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Vermont
Robert Willoughby, Middlebury

Cheddar wrapped in cloth, linen - aged up to 12 months - all milks
3rd Cabot Clothbound Cheddar
Cellars at Jasper Hill, Vermont
Marcel Gravel/Mateo and Andy Kehler
Cabot and Jasper Hill

Reduced Fat Cheese with Flavor Added - all milks
3rd Cabot Jalapeno Light Cheddar
Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Vermont
Dennis Dwinell, Cabot

Monterey Jack with Flavor Added - all milks
3rd McCadam Pepper Jack
McCadam Cheese, New York
Tony Ignaczak, Chateaugay

Crème Fraiche and Sour Cream Products - made from cow’s milk
3rd Cabot Crème Fraiche
Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Vermont
Bruce Roy, Cabot

Brick Muenster - made from cow’s milk
1st McCadam Muenster
McCadam Cheese, New York
Chris Holmes, Chateaugay

Unlock the benefits of the member website!

Members - if you need help with Agri-Mark’s website, please contact John Majkut at the co-op’s Andover, Mass., office.

Members are encouraged to use the toll-free numbers on page two and connect to extension 5562.

John can also be reached by dialing his extension directly at 978-352-5562 or by emailing him at jmajkut@agrimark.coop. He can be a key resource in helping you use the website as an important farm management tool!