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Illinois Milk Producers' Association

June 2006

SIU-ICC Cooperative Youth Conference

The Illinois Co-op Council and SIU's College of Agricultural Sciences recently sponsored a two-day youth conference focusing on educating Illinois and Missouri high school juniors and seniors about the cooperative way of doing business. Students learned about the seven cooperative principles, how a cooperative is organized and run, how a cooperative benefits its members, and developed a presentation on a detailed case study on a cooperative farmer-supply and service business. IMPA and two IMPA-member cooperatives help sponsor interested youths to this conference. This year set an all-time attendance record, hosting 76 students.



Students get to know each other during one of several mixers to start the conference.

Approximately 75% of the milk marketed in Illinois is marketed through the five IMPA-member dairy cooperatives!

Official Proclamation of June Dairy Month in Illinois

Governor Rod Blagojevich officially proclaimed June Dairy Month in Illinois during a ceremony. In Harvard, during the 65th Milk Day celebration, Director of Agriculture, Charles "Chuck" Hartke read a proclamation honoring the dairy farmers of Illinois for the total statewide economic impact of \$8 billion contributed to the state of Illinois.

"The 1,117 dairy farmers are the basis for the dairy industry, Hartke said. Illinois' dairy farmers are dedicated to providing you with safe, high-quality milk and dairy products. Their commitment to quality also means caring for their animals and the land. The dairy industry in Illinois directly employs over 11,600 Illinois citizens in producing, processing, and distribution of dairy products in Illinois. The state of Illinois is home to over 90 dairy processing plants that employ over eight thousand workers."

Across Illinois, it's not hard to find proof that June Dairy Month is a tradition that is alive and well. Dozens of county American Dairy Association (ADA) groups are active in local communities helping to make dairy products and dairy farming more visible to their city neighbors throughout the month.

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From the President

The worlds of many dairy producers in northwestern Illinois were turned upside down this spring when Berner Foods, Inc. first told some and eventually all of their farm suppliers that they no longer wanted to buy their patron's milk, which represented 6% of all milk produced in Illinois.

Some had a mere 4 1/2 days to find a new purchaser. Fortunately many cooperatives and private processors in the area agreed to take in extra milk, and DMS offered to take in all the displaced patrons. While no milk was lost, a strong feeling of betrayal permeated the area. As producers settle into new routines with new processors, we are reminded that, unlike other parts of the country, we are fortunate to still have many options for selling our milk. We also know, however, that every time a market is lost, the ultimate losers are all producers in the area.

IMPA Executive Summary

A meeting of the Illinois Milk Producers' Association was held on Monday, June 5, 2006, at the IAA Building in Bloomington, Illinois. There were nine directors present and two absent. Several advisory members and guests were present and monitored the meeting.

- ◆ The board reviewed and approved the financial reports.
- ◆ Chairman Doug Scheider reported on his first-hand experience with Berner Foods and their decision to cease direct milk purchases from dairy producers. All of the effected dairy farm families found a new home for their milk, and several IMPA-member cooperatives stepped up to take on additional milk from these families.
- ◆ A new ILDG brochure and an article celebrating "June is Dairy Month" highlighting the Jerry Gaffner family was distributed.
- ◆ Received oral reports from several advisory members to IMPA, including: Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Agriculture, MidWest Dairy Association, and University of Illinois.
- ◆ The board approved a memorial gift in the name of Don Kullmann, a retired Prairie Farms Dairy employee, that recently passed away.
- ◆ Bart Bittner, IFB lobbyist, discussed SB 2333, the bill which would not allow anonymous complaints

- ◆ from citizens reporting problems with agricultural facilities. IMPA staff will contact IEPA to discuss possible ways we can work together to ensure this bill's passage during the Fall Veto Session.
- ◆ The House Appropriations Bill in Congress stripped out funding for the final month of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) payments. MILC payments were recently extended to coincide with the expiration of the Farm Bill, but funding for the last month was not included. This will place MILC in a "new program category" during the Farm Bill development, which may be more difficult to ensure this program stays funded and in place.
- ◆ An IEPA document entitled *Best Management Practices for Dairy Producers* was distributed. It contains some excellent information regarding common-sense management practices for dairy-men to pro-actively enhance the environmental-quality of their farms.
- ◆ IEPA has been given a draft letter to review that will be sent to all Illinois dairy farm families regarding a potential pilot project on on-farm environmental assessments.
- ◆ The Illinois State Board of Education's proposed ban on "junk foods" (which would have banned some dairy products being sold in Illinois schools) was rejected by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.
- ◆ IMPA reviewed photos of a recent trip to the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences and a cow's udder for use in the 2007 IFB Ag In the Classroom Calendar.
- ◆ IMPA reviewed a letter sent jointly to NRCS from IPPA, IBA, IMPA, and IFB regarding several suggestions for improvement when implementing the EQIP program.
- ◆ IMPA will purchase another picnic table for the Dairy Building at the Illinois State Fair.
- ◆ IMPA reviewed the latest issue of IFB's *FarmWeek* which highlighted June is Dairy Month.

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The Illinois Milk Producers' Association Newsletter is a quarterly newsletter provided free of charge to all Illinois dairy farm families. For further information, contact:

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June is Dairy Month, continued ...

For example, in Boone County the 9th Annual Dairy Breakfast was held on Saturday, June 17th, 2006. The Family Af-Ayr Dairy Farm at Caledonia hosts the breakfast along with tours of their dairy farm. Breakfast of all-you-can eat pancakes was served from 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for just \$4 for adults and \$3 for children ages 6-10. Children under age 5 are free. "This is our ninth year doing the June Dairy Month Breakfast," said Melissa Irwin, Boone County committee member. "Events like this in our county help create visibility of our Boone County dairy producers to our local consumers and encourages them to use dairy products every day."

The 14th Annual Dairy Day on the Greenville Historic Square was Saturday, June 17th in conjunction with the National Road Festival. A farmers' market opened at 7 a.m. Many activities including milking a cow, milk mustache pictures, butter churning, ice cream making, pony rides, FFA Petting Farm, antique tractor display, crafts and games ran from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

On Saturday, June 24, the Stephenson County Farm Ag Breakfast was served from 6-10 a.m. at the Stephenson County Fairgrounds, 2250 Walnut Road, Freeport. Features included a 4-H animal display, antique and modern tractors, pedal pull competition, milk mustache booth, barnyard bowling and tractor drawn wagon rides. A \$4 donation per person for breakfast was requested for coffee cake, scrambled eggs, whole hog sausage, beef bacon, cheese, milk, coffee, and ice cream. Children five and under ate for free.

"This event allows us to work with other organizations to help promote the safe and nutritious dairy products our family farmers are so proud to produce," said Ardath DeWall, an Illinois dairy farmer. "It's always exciting to see so many organizations working with us to promote our local dairy industry."

4-H Clubs and Farm Bureau committees are another visible fixture at June Dairy Month activities. These volunteers do many promotions at parades, breakfasts on the farm, dairy days, grocery stores, and at industry events such as dairy shows. "Since school is out, they use these events to educate about the dairy industry and the importance of getting their three servings of dairy products every day," said Marla Behrends. "It's always fun to see their enthusiasm about dairy promotion and the industry at these events and many more around the state."

Win Bears Tickets for Family Night

Midwest Dairy Association (MDA) has teamed up with the Chicago Bears and Jewel Osco grocery stores again this year to help grow dairy product sales. The partnership offers a great opportunity for you to get involved during the second annual "Family Night at Soldier Field" on Tuesday evening, August 8, 2006.

Four sets of tickets are being provided by MDA to attend the event where the winners will be part of over 25,000 Bears fans to pack the lower levels of Soldier Field. The crowd will experience a pre-practice concert and a special interactive area outside the stadium including fireworks and contests. The Bears also promise an exciting Bears scrimmage inside the stadium.



MDA's Chicago Retail Marketing Manager, Steve Schneider says, "The Family Night sponsorship is part of a comprehensive 2006-07 campaign using the popularity of the Bears to drive consumers to purchase more dairy products in their

retail grocery store. Last year dairy farmers were able to partner with Jewel-Osco for Bears Training Table," said Schneider. "It was one of the largest retail programs in Chicago."

If you would like to win tickets for the Bears Family Night on the evening of Tuesday, August 8, at Soldier Field, please fill out the form below. Send your entry to: Marla Behrends, MDA Industry Relations, 23202 N. 950 E. Road, Carlock, IL 61725. A lottery will be held for the opportunity to attend the clinic.

SB2333 Stalls in the House

At IMPA's last meeting, the board of directors discussed efforts to pass legislation that would no longer allow anonymous complaints against livestock producers when a citizen "turns in" a complaint. The bill had assurances in its language that would keep the complainant confidential, but would require IEPA to verify the name and address of the person registering a complaint against a livestock producer.

Concerns over increased numbers of accusations, many of which may be unfounded, spurred this legislation. Senator Frank Watson spearheaded this effort, and his leadership helped to achieve firm passage in the Senate. Unfortunately, time ran out in the Illinois Legislative Session for the House to take action. IMPA is determined to work with interested parties to seek passage of this important piece of legislation.

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Good News for Dairy

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) voted on June 22, 2006 to approve the revised proposed school food service Ruling 305. ISBE will now send the ruling to the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) for their review and vote. If it passes the final step is filing it with the Secretary of State.

Midwest Dairy Association's (MDA), Chicago school nutrition program manager, Sandra Brown, provided the testimony and rationale to follow sound nutrition science reflected in the 2005 Dietary Guidelines by emphasizing nutrient density. Her testimony was the background for issues surrounding potential new guidelines on food sold outside school cafeterias, including snacks and drinks available from vending machines.

Brown said, " she is elated with the ISBE vote and feels they listened to her testimony to consider foods providing nutrients like calcium and others of concern to children for exemption from fat, sugar, and calorie limits. She reminded ISBE that milk, cheese and yogurt provide three of the five nutrients of concern calcium, magnesium, and potassium).

According to Brown, "the ruling is very favorable to dairy because whole, 2%, 1% and non-fat milk (and flavors) is allowed, single-serve cheese is exempted, and low-fat yogurt is exempted."

St. Louis Dairy Council Spruces Up Website

From dairy-friendly recipes to the latest scientific research, St. Louis District Dairy Council's newly renovated website, www.stldairycouncil.org, has something for everyone.

The website has proven to be a valuable tool for schools. In an effort to promote the value of dairy in children's diets, materials are available for educators to view and print for use in the classroom. Teachers can find the latest nutrition education programs offered by the National Dairy Council.

Consumers can use the web-site to learn more about the importance of dairy in a healthy diet and to find quick easy dairy recipes. A link to the consumer-friendly, 3-A-Day website, www.3aday.org, is also provided to enhance dairy knowledge.

