

President's Letter
Allen G. Squire
June, 2009

We are rapidly approaching our Annual Convention/Trade Show and Golf Tournament in Ruidoso June 12-13. I would like to invite all dairy producers, both DPNM members and non members, to attend so you can be involved in discussing and helping shape the future of the dairy industry in the Southwest as well as the whole country. It's true that change only results from tough times. Let's make sure that the change we get is the change that we can live with.

As I write this, I have heard of plans to dump milk for 1-2 days to help reduce the surplus and to make a statement of protest over milk prices. While I would prefer to put our product to beneficial use in some non-self competing area (cheese or powder to impoverished areas or countries), I certainly empathize with the sentiments of the proponents and may very well participate if the plan comes to fruition. I have heard of a variety of programs intended to balance supply and demand with the major stumbling block being the necessity of government involvement. With the current anti-business, anti-CAFO, anti-greenhouse gas attitude from Washington, I think that it would be generally bad business to ask the government to participate more in our industry. Just look what is happening to General Motors!

I feel that the litmus test for any milk marketing program that we come up with should be whether it could be flexible enough to have reacted immediately to the export demand decline (market loss) that put us into this current price mess. Any program that cannot pass this test should not be considered.

Some of you are probably reading this Udder Report for the first time. I asked to have this edition sent to all dairymen in the region so you could be involved in discussions that affect all of our futures. Remember that the world is run by those who show up! If you doubt this, take a look at our National Political Scene. While many of us have been too busy making a living and spending time with our families to get involved in politics, there are lots of folks positioning themselves to help "spread the wealth around." Unfortunately, there are many at the state and federal level who oppose animal agriculture, CAFO's or even business in general. Even if you think that you are not very politically oriented, be aware that these folks will get us involved anyway – but we will be on the receiving end of their stick.

DPNM is a grassroots producer organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing the dairy industry of the Southwest. Our budget is entirely dedicating to protecting our

interests in Santa Fe and Washington. Our executive director, Sharon Lombardi, and the staff are incredibly dedicated to protecting the interests of our industry, probably even more than some of us are.

Our agenda for the Producer Meeting on Friday, June 12, at 8 a.m. includes a “State of the Agency” report concerning the Greater Southwest Agency. There will also be a discussion and overview of supply management proposals by Dr. Terry Crawford of NMSU. A breakout session on managing margins to protect profitability will also be available. After you come to the meeting and see what DPNM has done and continues to do for you, be sure to pick up a membership application form and become a member. It will be the best one cent you’ve ever spent.