

President's Letter
Gary Bonestroo
March, 2008

Well, it looks like we're on the eve of another blood bath in the dairy industry. With feed commodity prices still on the rise, high utilities, and milk prices tumbling, it looks like the good times are over. Is it 2007 all over again...from going broke to making money? What's up with that? I have not seen cheese drop below \$1.80 for more than a week, and our March advance is only going to be \$14.00 with class 1 at 40% +/- and class III at 38% +/- utilization. Why should our advance be that low? DFA told us we would have a \$3.00 drop in 3 months, but a \$14.00 advance already equals a \$5.00 drop. The roller coaster ride is building up speed, so HOLD ON!!

We sent a letter to our promotion organizations asking for more help in the areas of public relations and news coverage in New Mexico and West Texas for the dairy industry. We believe this must be addressed by the dairy promotion dollars. There is a lack of good news about dairy in these areas. We believe if one person could be assigned to this area to write news releases or even newspaper articles on a weekly basis it would enhance our image greatly. Also, the public relations part could entail the person doing presentations for civic organizations and community leaders. We need to get the word out on all the good dairy has done for our communities and for the health of our nation. Our dairy promotion organizations are the ideal organizations to help us locally to "tell our story." We will be working with them on this effort.

We have hired TJ Trujillo, with Gallagher & Kennedy, to work on legislative issues on a state level. There's only so much of Sharon to go around. She has worked hard for us for the past 14 years...going on 15 years...but we need more help. Hoyt Pattison who has helped us lobby for the past several years wants to cut back—he's been involved in state politics for over 40 years! We wish him well and we will miss him! However, we now have TJ and he has been great, learning what we need and taking direction from Sharon. Speaking of help, we are very fortunate that Ben Yale is still working for us on federal issues such as Immigration Reform, Farm Bill, Federal Milk Marketing Order Issues, etc. Jay Lazarus is working on many environmental issues from the State to Region 6 CAFO rulings, keeping a watchful eye on all the environmental issues. He does a great job too.

DPNM has many more people helping on everything concerning the dairy industry in New Mexico. Believe it or not, all these things cost a lot of money. If any of your dairy neighbors are not members, urge them to join and to attend the upcoming district meetings. DPNM protects the producers' interests on many levels, and we could do

even more if every dairyman in the state was a member. But, there are “free loaders” out there that don’t want to contribute and “cry” about the 1 cent cwt to be a member. We’re going to lose \$3 - \$4 cwt in 3 months! So, if 1 cent is going to break you, maybe you need to sell your cows! Give me a break! It really upsets me that we have these producers that complain, but do nothing. I mean 1 cent cwt is nothing. We even have some West Texas dairymen who have joined just for federal issues at ¼ cent cwt. They know that DPNM will protect their interests on federal issues. It’s important that we have representation, as southwest dairy producers, for the southwest is the future in dairy and we are unique, so very different than any other area, so it’s imperative that we stand united. So if you know of neighboring dairies that have not joined, give them an ear full; and if you are not sure if they are members, just ask us.

Have a great one...