



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC
20250

DAIRY MARKET NEWS

Working Guidelines

The Market News Service is authorized by the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 and is supported by annual congressional appropriations and user fees. The Agricultural Marketing Act described the purpose of Market News in part, as follows: "To collect and disseminate Marketing information, including adequate outlook information on a market-area basis, for the purpose of anticipating and meeting consumer requirements, aiding in the maintenance of farm income, and bringing about a balance between production and utilization of agricultural products."

Dairy Market News reporters collect information through voluntary telephone surveys of industry contacts. These contacts represent all segments of the dairy trade including: producers, processors, end users, buyers, brokers, and others. The diverse contact base allows reporters to cross-evaluate reported data. All reported data is strictly confidential. The information from all contacts is analyzed, summarized and then the composite information is released to the industry at a specified time. Reporters seek out any contact that is willing to talk to them on a regular basis.

REPORTING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are based on reporting principles from our Handbook and are compiled from our actual daily operating procedures.

GENERAL IN NATURE

- Without industry cooperation there would be no market report
- Cooperation is possible because the industry values the information for making marketing decisions
- All information collected is confidential and voluntary
- Reports are a survey of the industry and not all inclusive
- Reporters are unbiased in reporting and strive for consistency

MORE SPECIFIC ISSUES

- If unable to confirm information with the buyer and seller and it is not representative of the market, reporters are under no obligation to use it
- If a confirmed trade is unrepresentative of the market, reporters are not obligated to use it
- Uneconomic trading is questioned
- Quality and terms of sale including transportation are always an issue
- Reporting procedures are consistent whether prices are increasing or decreasing

CONDITIONS OF SALE

- Reporters are looking for spot sales in carlot/truckload (CL/TL) quantities
 - First sale, FOB plant
 - **First sale, FOB plant or warehouse, by marketing agent (effective Report 1 2016)**
 - Resale information is used for comments only
- No audits of sales records are performed
- The mostly price range may be used to more closely define the majority of trades when applicable
- Mostly price ranges are not volume weighted, but are transaction driven
- Nominal prices - When not enough actual transactions are reported on a particular product or specific grade of product, the reporter may report a nominal price series. Ordinarily, published prices are based upon actual transactions; however, because of the practical uses made of price information by buyers and sellers, nominal prices may be published for brief periods. Nominal prices represent reporters' knowledge and best judgment as to value - - considerations being given to:
 - Expressed opinions of buyers and sellers as to current value.
 - Usual price differentials between other grades or levels of trading.
 - The general tone of the market, available supplies, etc.
 - Other factors which may have an influence on the price.

No price shall be reported on a particular product or specific grade of product when under the above-mentioned conditions, no fair price can be arrived at in the mind of the reporter.

CONTRACTS

- The general definition is that reporters use spot sales
- Some contract sales qualify to be included if they meet certain criteria:
 - include a new contract sale the week it is established
 - if the volume is negotiated each week with none as a possibility
 - prices may be based on an index, but sales must be representative of current market conditions
- Contract sales are included for lactose and casein markets per industry practice and this is explicitly stated in the price line for these reports

ADDITIONAL

The industry is consulted when additional products to report are considered. Any changes or modifications to reports are noticed to the industry prior to implementation after comprehensive consideration to establish that changes are market neutral.

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<http://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/dairy>



Issued 2/2007; reissued 12/2015