

Greeting (also to callers): Welcome to our Pre-hearing Information session. We last had a session like this in December 2006 in preparation for a hearing on changes to the Class III and Class IV product pricing formulas.

Introduction of Panel: My name is Gino Tosi, I am with Dairy Programs. Joining me today is Mr. John Mengel, who is the Chief Economist of Dairy Programs.

Opening Statement Today is not a hearing,

- The fundamental purpose of today's information session is:
 - 1) To help proponents prepare clear and concise arguments in support of, or in opposition to, proposals submitted to consider changes to the producer-handler and exempt plant provisions in all Federal milk marketing orders..
 - 2) Clarify the intent and effect of proposals.
 - 3) Assure that the Department fully understands the proposals.
- The information session **WILL NOT** be used to challenge the validity of proposals, nor argue the merits (or lack thereof) of proposals.
- The proceedings of the information session are not subject to ex-parte rules and will not be made part of the official hearing record.
- All proponents present today, and those who are joining us by phone, will have the opportunity to present a brief description of their proposal(s). Each proponent will be asked questions, as necessary, to clarify the intent of their proposal(s). Only Mr. Mengel or I may question session participants.
- If anyone in the audience has a question for a presenter, they may submit the question to the panel for consideration. I will ask if anyone has questions they would like to submit following each presentation.
- Proposals addressed today were requested in a Notice published on the Dairy Programs internet site on February 6, 2009, which originally set a deadline for March 9, 2009. On March 6, we also published on our internet site that the deadline for additional proposals had been extended to March 16, 2009

- Following today's session, proponents will have until Wednesday, March 25th to revise their proposal(s). Please submit those revisions in the same way you submitted your proposals those revisions. Proponents may also elect to withdraw their proposal completely.
- We ask that any requests for data to be prepared by the Department for possible use in the hearing be done as soon as possible. According to our rules of practice, your request for data must be made at least 10 days prior to a hearing, and if less than 15 days notice is given for the hearing, then your request needs to be at least 3 days prior to the hearing. Any requests for data after this date may not be honored.
- We have received many requests to date for data. For example, we have published that data we are able to provide. Any request for data will be made public and available to the public.

Begin presentations..... We will begin our presentation of the proposals in the order they were received.