

Georgia Milk Producers —

GEORGIA MILK REVIEW

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Federal Order Hearing Requested for Southeast

On October 27, the Dairy Cooperative Marketing Association (DCMA) submitted a Request for Hearing for amendments to Federal Marketing Orders 5, 6, and 7. DCMA is a common marketing agency consisting of nine cooperative members: Appalachian Dairy Farmers Cooperative, Cobblestone Milk Cooperative, Cooperative Milk Producers Association, Dairy Farmers of America, Lanco Dairy Farms Co-op, Lone Star Milk Producers, Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Select Milk Producers, and Southeast Milk. The 35-page petition lays out five proposals aimed at addressing marketing disorder in the southeast by updating the current T-credit system for the Appalachian and Southeast orders and establishing an intra-order credit in all three orders.

Proposals 1 and 2 would update the Transportation Credit Balancing Funds in Order 5 (Appalachian) and 7 (Southeast). The proposals would double the maximum assessment in both orders lifting the maximum assessment to \$0.30/cwt in Federal Order 5 and \$0.60/cwt in Federal Order 7. The proposals would also update the components of the mileage rate calculation in both orders to better represent the fuel costs, fuel efficiency, operation costs, and average payload milk haulers currently face. Furthermore, the proposal also calls for a revision to the non-reimbursed milage factor. Instead of taking the difference of the distance from the farm to the receiving pool plant minus 85 miles to calculate the eligible mileage for payment, the proposal calls for a reduction of 15% of the total miles from the origination point to the plant. In addition to adjusting payment formulas and rates, the proposals would also change the timeframe requiring payments from the Transportation Credit Balancing Fund. Under the proposal, payments would be required from July-January, and payments from the fund are allowed for February and June as the market administrator deems necessary.

Proposals 3, 4, and 5 would establish an “intra-order T-credit” to reimburse transportation costs to handlers that service local markets year-round. The proposals create a Distributing Plant Delivery Credit Fund (DPDCF) and payment program in Orders 5, 6, and 7.

The proposed initial assessment rates would be \$0.55, \$0.80, and \$0.45 per hundredweight in Orders 5, 6, and 7, respectively, and the market administrator would have the discretion to increase the assessment rate up or down as necessary. The eligibility requirements would be set to include the geographical marketing areas of the orders plus specific year-round procurement areas that are outside the marketing areas. Finally, the market administrator would have the ability to adjust the reimbursed mileage percentage between 75-95% of farm to plant mileage with an initial rate set at 85% (the same rate as the proposed T-credit rate for reimbursed milage).

On November 28, USDA AMS published a letter calling for submission of additional proposals regarding DCMA's proposed amendments to the Federal Orders. Proposals must be received by December 19, 2022. USDA will determine whether to call a hearing after it has received additional proposals from interested parties. If USDA determines a hearing should be held, all know interested parties will be sent a copy of the Notice of Hearing. During the hearing, all interested parties may present evidence on proposals listed in the Notice of Hearing.

Read DCMA's petition to USDA and USDA AMS's response and call for submissions [HERE](#).

Program to Help Producers Drill Irrigation Wells in SW GA

The Georgia Flow Incentive Trust (GA-FIT) is now taking applications for the Drought SWAP program. Drought SWAP, managed by the Georgia Water Planning & Policy Center in coordination with EPD, will assist farmers in drilling irrigation wells that will reduce the use of surface-water withdrawals for irrigation during droughts. Farms in the Flint River Basin

project area (pictured left) will be eligible. Applications will be rated based on a set of criteria including acreage, storage pond availability and other factors. To learn more about eligibility requirements, visit <https://ga-fit.org/drought-swap/>.

Preliminary applications are due December 15, 2022.



2023 GEORGIA DAIRY CONFERENCE IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

As the calendar flips quickly from November to December, that means the Georgia Dairy Conference is just a few weeks away. The Georgia Dairy Conference is Georgia Milk Producer's flagship event bringing together producers from across Georgia and the Southeastern United States for three days of networking, learning, and collaboration. Georgia Milk Producers will hold its annual meeting before the conference at 10:00 AM on Monday, January 16. The Georgia ADA Board, Agricultural Commodity Commission for Milk, and Georgia Dairy Youth Foundation will also hold their board meetings before the conference kicks off Monday afternoon.

This year's conference is shaping up to be a great event with a lineup of nationally prominent speakers. We'll have a Markets Monday theme with presentations from Dr. Marin Bozic from University of Minnesota, Patti Smith of DairyAmerica, Carl Babler of Atten-Babler Commodities, and a longtime friend of the conference Calvin Covington. Tuesday's theme is Technical Talks with expert presentations on the latest innovations in dairy management from calf rearing, financial management, mastitis therapy, milk quality, and more. Wednesday will feature updates on promotional efforts and consumer preferences from The Dairy Alliance's Geri Berdak and NC State's Dr. MaryAnne Drake.

In addition to our general session speakers, we will have a breakfast Q&A on state animal health regulations with State Veterinarian Dr. Janemarie Hennebelle, the Bobby Walker Award presentation, the Georgia Dairy Youth Foundation silent auction, the Dairy Wives Social, research presentations by UGA and UF faculty and students, and our Georgia Dairy Conference Trade Show. For a full agenda and schedule of events, visit www.gadairyconference.com/agenda.

Registration for Georgia dairy farms is free and \$250 for out-of-state farms and guests. Our host hotel, the beautiful Marriott Savannah Riverfront, has offered a special room rate for GDC attendees of \$139/night. Georgia dairy farmers will also receive a \$100/night discount for two nights during the conference. This is our way of showing our appreciation to the producers who make up the Georgia dairy industry. Rooms are filling up fast in our room block, so I encourage Georgia producers to register for the conference and book their rooms at www.gadairyconference.com as soon as possible.

I hope to see you all in Savannah January 16-18. For more info on the conference, registration, room reservations, and exhibitor info for the trade show visit www.gadairyconference.com or email me at bryce@gamilk.org.

Sincerely,



The banner features the Georgia Dairy Conference logo with a cow silhouette, the text "2023 The Southeast's Premier Dairy Event", the date "January 16-18, 2023", the location "Savannah, Georgia", and information about the "Trade show with 70+ exhibitors" and "16 guest speakers including...". To the right, there is a photograph of a riverboat on the Savannah River at night, with the city skyline and a bridge in the background. Seven circular portraits of guest speakers are displayed below the photo: Marin Bozic, Calvin Covington, MaryAnne Drake, Paul Fricke, Gordie Jones, Michael Overton, and Pamela Ruegg.

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USDA Invites Ag Producers to Respond to the 2022 Census of Agriculture

WASHINGTON, Nov. 22, 2022 – Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) mailed survey codes to all known agriculture producers across the 50 states with an invitation to respond online to the 2022 Census of Agriculture at agcounts.usda.gov. The ag census is the nation's only comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every state, county, and territory. By completing the survey, producers across the nation can tell their story and help generate impactful opportunities that better serve them and future generations of producers.

The 2022 Census of Agriculture will be mailed in phases, with paper questionnaires following in December. Producers need only respond once, whether securely online or by mail. The online option offers timesaving features ideal for busy producers. All responses are due Feb. 6, 2023. Farm operations of all sizes, urban and rural, which produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products in 2022, are included in the ag census.

"The 2022 Census of Agriculture is a powerful voice for American agriculture. The information gathered through the ag census influences policy decisions that will have a tremendous impact on ag producers and their communities for years to come," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "I strongly encourage all farmers, no matter how large or small their operation, to promptly complete and return their ag census. This is your opportunity to share your voice, uplift the value and showcase the uniqueness of American agriculture."

Collected in service to American agriculture since 1840 and now conducted every five years by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census of Agriculture is a complete picture of American agriculture today. It highlights land use and ownership, producer characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, among other topics.

"Our farmers and ranchers have an incredible impact on our nation and the world. I want to thank them in advance for responding to the ag census," said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. "We recognize how valuable their time is, so we have made responding more convenient and modern than ever before."

Between ag census years, NASS considers revisions to the questionnaire to document changes and emerging trends in the industry. Changes to the 2022 questionnaire include new questions about the use of precision agriculture, hemp production, hair sheep and updates to internet access questions.

Responding to the Census of Agriculture is required by law under Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113. The same law requires NASS to keep all information confidential, to use the data only for statistical purposes, and only publish in aggregate form to prevent disclosing the identity of any individual producer or farm operation. NASS will release the results of the ag census in early 2024.

Melanie Biersmith Selected as Georgia's Ninth State 4-H Leader

By Josie Smith | UGA CAES Newswire

Georgia 4-H has selected Melanie Biersmith as the new state 4-H leader. Effective Nov. 1, Biersmith is the ninth state leader in the organization's 118-year history.

The state 4-H leader provides strategic vision in response to the changing needs of Georgia's youth and works to support diversity and inclusiveness in youth programming.

Georgia 4-H operates under the scope of University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and reaches more than 240,000 youth in a typical program year.

Biersmith most recently served as the associate state 4-H leader for facilities and residential programs for Georgia 4-H, where she managed operations and personnel at all six Georgia 4-H centers, plus coordination of the Georgia 4-H Environmental Education program and summer camp program.

Her career with UGA Extension began in 2003 as the environmental education coordinator on Jekyll Island. She then served as the director of Georgia 4-H at Camp Jekyll and later as the Extension 4-H specialist for science and environmental education until 2018.

Biersmith holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Georgia College and State University and a master's degree in science education from the University of Georgia. She resides in Morgan County with her husband, Andy, her daughter, Drew, and her son, Sam.

"It is inspiring to see the potential in every young person," Biersmith said. "I appreciate the opportunity to watch their development and see how positive youth development experiences guide them on their journey to adulthood."

In her role as state 4-H leader, Biersmith will also oversee recruitment and development of 4-H faculty and staff, advocate for extramural funding to support faculty scholarship, and champion the success Georgia 4-H facilities.

Her leadership will impact in-school, after-school and non-traditional delivery models facilitated by approximately 120 county Extension agents, 225 educators, program assistants and AmeriCorps members, as well as thousands of volunteers.

The state 4-H leader guides Georgia 4-H towards the vision and mission of helping youth thrive.

"Melanie will ensure the continued success and stability of Georgia 4-H while also providing a transformative vision for the future of Georgia 4-H," said Laura Perry Johnson, associate dean for Extension with the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Ag Scholarships Available for GA Students

The Georgia Foundation for Agriculture recently announced the application period for its 2023 scholarships. The Foundation offers a total of 26 scholarships for graduating high school seniors, students in the GA Technical College System, current college students studying agriculture, and students at UGA's College of Veterinary Medicine. Visit www.GaFoundationAg.org/scholarships for more information.

The Georgia Association of Conservation Districts is now taking applications for its GACD Scholarship for students majoring in or intending to major in a soil-and-water-related area. Acceptable areas of study include agricultural education, agronomy, horticulture, plant pathology, agricultural communications, and more. The application submission deadline is **December 31, 2022**. For more information, visit www.gacd.us/scholarships

NMPF, IDFA Seek to Fix WIC Proposal That Would Decrease Access to Dairy's Nutrients

ARLINGTON, Va. and WASHINGTON, DC – Representing dairy farmers, cooperatives, and processors, the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) issued the following joint statement in response to USDA's proposed changes to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) released today:

"It is unfortunate for WIC participants that the proposed rule would decrease access to dairy products and the unique nutrient profile they provide, especially considering the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) note that a staggering nearly 90 percent of the U.S. population does not consume enough dairy to meet dietary recommendations. At a time of rising food costs and high food insecurity, we should focus on increasing access to a wide variety of healthful, nutrient-dense, and affordable foods, including both fresh produce and dairy products. It's disappointing that the proposed rule would limit WIC family purchasing power for nutritious dairy foods, particularly at a time like this."

"WIC is central to helping ensure pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and children have access to the nutrients needed for growth and development at the critical life stages surrounding pregnancy, birth, and early childhood. The vast body of nutrition science demonstrates that nutritious dairy products like milk, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese are especially important in the diets of women, infants, and children. Dairy is a source of 13 nutrients, including three of the four nutrients of public health concern as noted by the DGA, which is why dairy has always played a significant role in the WIC program."

"NMPF and IDFA commend USDA for suggesting approaches to make the nutrient-dense food provided by the WIC program more accessible, including expanded options for yogurt and cheese varieties and for proposing WIC participants be able to purchase these dairy products in a wider variety of product package sizes that are more commonly found in grocery stores. We also applaud USDA for its continued commitment to nutritional equivalency in substitute products, rejecting those that do not provide an equivalent nutrition package, as recommended by the DGA."

"We look forward to working with USDA to modernize the WIC food package for eligible families to access nutrient-dense milk, yogurt, and cheese varieties that are a part of their everyday diets and accessible in neighborhood stores, thus fulfilling the program's nutritional objectives. IDFA, NMPF, and our members will advocate against reducing the amount of nutritious dairy foods provided through WIC in USDA's final rule because we are committed to reducing food insecurity, malnutrition, and diet-related disease while improving health outcomes by making it easier for all Americans to access healthy, affordable foods, including nutritious dairy products. We hope USDA will work to achieve these same objectives as they develop a final WIC rule, which, given dairy's unique nutrient package and incomparable role in nourishing WIC participants, will require USDA not to decrease access to dairy in the WIC program."

Monthly Production Report Shows Increased Production in Georgia

[USDA's November 21st Milk Production Report](#) showed a 1.4% increase in production nationwide in October 2022 over the same month last year. Revised estimates for September show a 1.5% increase over September 2021.

September production in Georgia was up from 137 million lbs. in 2021 to 156 million lbs. (a 13.9% increase). October 2022 production is estimated at 156 million lbs. or an increase of 19 million lbs. over last October's production.

Production per cow is up as well. Nationally, production per cow in the 24 major states averaged 2,021 lbs. for October 2022, and Georgia production per cow was up to an average of 1,800 lbs. (an increase of 18 and 20 lbs., respectively).

GA Milk Production: July 2020-October 2022
(millions lbs.)

