USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspections Service released its annual report of U.S. somatic cell counts today, showing that SCCs averaged 193,000 cells/mL in 2014 in the four Federal Orders that collect SCC data.

The average SCC level remains unchanged for the past three years, but has declined from 227,000 cells/ml in 2009. “Over 99% of milk shipments monitored met the current Pasteurized Milk Ordinance limit of 750,000 cells/mL,” say APHIS investigators.

And based on European Union criteria for its health certification program, less than 3% of milk shipments would not have met the 400,000 cell/mL requirement for export.

The four Federal Orders included in the report: Upper Midwest, Central, Mideast and Southwest. These four orders produce 48% of the nation’s milk supply.

The Mideast Order had the lowest average cell count, at 179,000 cells/mL. Cell counts in the Southwest Federal Order, where many cattle are housed in open lots and subject to weather extremes, have shown the greatest variation in milk quality over the past five years.


Source: Dairy Today

Report Crop Damage Promptly

If your crop is damaged, you are responsible to file notice with your agent within 72 hours. The policy requires that such notices should be in writing. Therefore, if you file a notice of damage by phone, ask your crop insurance agent for a copy of the notice that they file with the insurance company because it is critical that a paper trail exists. Also, remember the evidence of damage must be viewed by an adjuster or you may lose policy benefits.
PORTLAND, June 29, 2015 — Agriculture Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden today announced that starting July 1, 2015, dairy farmers can enroll in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Margin Protection Program for coverage in 2016. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy operations when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer. Harden made the announcement while visiting Wolfe’s Neck Farm and dairy school in Freeport, Maine.

"More than half of our nation’s dairy producers enrolled in the 2015 program, which exceeded our expectations for the first year of the program," said Harden. "We are confident that dairy farmers across the country will again take advantage of this safety net program for 2016. USDA will continue outreach efforts, including partnering with cooperative extension services, to ensure dairy producers are fully informed about the protections that this safety net program can provide during periods of market downturns."

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment begins July 1 and ends on Sept. 30, 2015, for coverage in 2016. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a $100 administrative fee each year. Producers also have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year. Margin Protection Program payments are based on an operation’s historical production. An operation’s historical production will increase by 2.61 percent in 2016 if the operation participated in 2015, providing a stronger safety net.

USDA also has an online resource available to help dairy producers decide which level of coverage will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The enhanced Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine their unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, mobile phone, or tablet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions. Producers participating in the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program may register for the Margin Protection Program, but this new margin program will only begin once their Livestock dairy insurance coverage has ended. Producers must also submit form CCC-782 for 2016, confirming their Margin Protection Program coverage level selection, to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. If electing higher coverage for 2016, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay a minimum of 25 percent of the premium by Feb. 1, 2016.

The Margin Protection Program was established by the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past six years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.

For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy for more information, or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit http://offices.usda.gov.

Source: USDA New Release No. 0191.15
The Secure Milk Supply (SMS) Plan is a national effort funded by USDA APHIS with the goal of maintaining business continuity for dairy producers and processors during a hoof-and-mouth disease (HMD) outbreak while minimizing disease spread and assuring a continuous supply of milk and milk products to consumers. There are a variety of regional plans in development throughout the U.S. that take into account milk movement patterns and regulatory issues.

In the event HMD is diagnosed in the United States, a national animal health emergency will be declared and livestock as well as allied industries will feel the immediate impact of animal and animal product quarantine and movement restrictions. Quarantine, managed movement and mandatory biosecurity protocols are designed to contain and control the disease and minimize virus spread. In the dairy industry, the just-in-time supply practices of milk movement in the U.S. could be significantly impacted by managed movement and the need for additional biosecurity at farms and processing facilities. This could lead to a disruption of the provision of milk and milk products to consumers impacting normal business. Additionally, there could be significant milk disposal and animal welfare issues on dairies. Most dairy operations and processing plants do not have the capacity to store milk for more than 48 hours; some have less than 24 hours storage capacity. Hence, pre-planning for safe, timely, risk-based, permitted movement of animals and animal products will be critical to maintaining the business continuity (survival) of the dairy industry while controlling and containing the outbreak. The SMS Plan is working to develop the pre-event plan to minimize the impact of an HMD outbreak in the United States.

The USDA-APHIS has developed the HMD Response Plan in the event the disease occurs in the U.S. The response goals are to following:

- Detect, control and contain HMD in animals as quickly as possible
- Eradicate HMD using strategies that stabilize animal agriculture, food supply, economy, protect human health, and
- Provide science- and risk-based approaches and systems that facilitate continuity of business of non-infected animals and non-contaminated animal products

The overall goal of the SMS Plan is “to maintain milk movement form dairy farms with no evidence of infection a Hoof-and-Mouth (HMD) outbreak and to provide a continuous supply of wholesome milk and milk products for consumers.” Accomplishing this goal requires a partnership between industry (producers, haulers and processors), states (animal health officials, regulatory officials), the federal government (animal health officials, planners, policy makers), and academia (subject matter experts, communication facilitators). Participation in the SMS is strictly VOLUNTARY. For those that choose to participate in pre-event planning, the goal is less disruptions for their milk to reach processing plants.

New Jersey is part of the Mid-Atlantic States Projects along with Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. In this region, the SMS Plan concepts, including the Biosecurity Performance Standards, will be introduced to producers, milk haulers and processors at meetings to be held in the coming months. Be on the lookout for notifications of these meetings. If you have any questions, give Dave Lee, Jasen Berkowitz or Kelly Steimle at the Salem County Extension Office a call at (856) 769-0090.
**New Jersey State Holstein Show**

The 2015 NJ State 4-H and NJ State Holstein show dates are August 25-27. This year the event is taking place at the Hunterdon County Fairgrounds in Hunterdon County. The event schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, Aug. 25th - Move in
- Wednesday, Aug. 26th - State 4-H Show
- Thursday, Aug. 27th - State Holstein Show

All entries are due by August 14th and are to be sent to:
Salem County Extension Office
51 Cheney Road, Suite 1
Woodstown, NJ 08098

**Artisan/Farmstead Cheesemaker Food Safety Workshop**

The Artisan/Farmstead Cheesemaker Food Safety Workshop course builds upon core knowledge of dairy hygiene, essential good manufacturing and hygiene practices, sanitation standard operating procedures and other pre-requisite programs to help producers improve their operations and achieve food safety by preventing, monitoring and reducing food safety risks in critical areas of food safety before they become regulatory or affect the consumer. The main focal points of this class include the discussion of bacteriostatic and bactericidal control points in the manufacture of cheese, validating and verifying the efficacy of said preventative controls, environmental pathogen control and monitoring as well as raw ingredient and product pathogen testing.

**When:** September 23, 2015
8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

**Where:** Saputo Cheese
861 Washington Ave.
Carlstadt, NJ 07072-3001

**Cost:** $49

To Register Visit: [www.usdairy.com/events](http://www.usdairy.com/events)

This newsletter is brought to you by the Garden State Crop Insurance Education Initiative, a partnership between the USDA Risk Management Agency, New Jersey Department of Agriculture and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County. For additional information about crop insurance, contact your crop insurance agent, locate a crop insurance agent at [www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html](http://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html), visit our website [http://salem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance](http://salem.rutgers.edu/cropinsurance) or call our toll free hotline 1-800-308-2449.

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