

Hillview Dairy Farm  
RR 2 Box 203  
Meshoppen, PA 18630-9418

USDA  
OALJ/HCO  
2001 JAN 31 A 9:57

RECEIVED

Hearing Clerk  
Room 1081, South Building  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20250

I would like to take this opportunity to express my opinions on the "Proposed Rule" affecting the Class III and IV pricing. As a dairy farmer, I feel that a grave injustice was done in the handling of the ballots. The ballot process was too short for an adequate review by the dairy farmers. This issue is very complex and our time was too short to do a proper evaluation of the "Proposed Rule". We had barely two weeks to examine the "Tentative Decision", and many of our friends, who were eligible did not even get a chance to vote, because they were never sent the ballot.

I feel that existing law is being ignored. The 1937 Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act (7 U.S.C. 608(c)18) is currently not being enforced. Dairy farming is the only business that does not currently have a cost of production factor in the way that it is priced. I realize the importance that processors have in turning our raw milk into a variety of products, which then is sent all over the United States. As far as I know, it has never been the intent of the dairy farmers to lay a hardship on the processors, but processors have protection under current rules. Then, so, should the milk producer have the same protection sufficient to sustain production. This would directly benefit both the rural communities and the consumers.

It is my opinion, that existing agricultural law should and must be followed. We must be given a proper opportunity to examine and understand the issues that are affecting the way that our raw milk is priced. USDA should be serving our best interests by respecting our rights under 608(c)18. So far USDA had failed to do just that.

Sincerely,

  
Tinamarie Carlin

Dairy Farmer