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Louisiana

Dairy Digest

Your Herd Management Resource

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JULY-AUGUST 2003

**July Advanced Class I Milk Increases Again to \$12.87/cwt.
 Dr. Cary "Bill" Herndon, Ag Economist
 Mississippi State University**

The first glimmer of light has finally penetrated the dark clouds that have overhung the dairy industry for the past 18 months. This twinkle of hope for improving milk prices comes primarily from declining milk output reported for the month of May by the USDA. Despite this good news, milk prices remain at 25-year lows where the national All Milk price for June was reported at \$11.10 per cwt., which is the lowest this price series has been since October 1978. The July Class IV Advanced skim milk price was again the Class I mover (based on the value of skim milk used in butter and powder production) because it was greater than the corresponding Class III prices (representing skim milk value in cheddar cheese products). In this case, the USDA reported that the July 2003 Advanced Class IV Skim Milk price was \$5.92 per hundredweight (cwt.) compared to the Advanced Class III Skim Milk price of \$5.81 per cwt. The difference between these respective Class III and Class IV prices (after factoring in butterfat prices) resulted in an 11-cent per cwt. higher Class I base price (\$9.77 versus \$9.66). Therefore, the USDA announced on June 18 that the July 2003 Advanced Class I "base" milk price would be \$9.77 per cwt. (for 3.5% butterfat milk). After adding the \$3.10 Class I price differential for the pricing zone which includes Atlanta and Starkville (Oktibbeha County) to this "base" price, the Advanced Class I milk price for July will be \$12.87 per cwt (South La price is generally \$.50 higher than the North Central Zone.) So, the July Advanced Class I price (for the North Central Zone) is \$12.87 per cwt. and represents a INCREASE of 3 cents per cwt. (+0.5%) ABOVE the corresponding June price of \$12.84. This year's July Advanced Class I price is \$0.85 (-6.2%) LESS than the July 2002 Class I price of \$13.72 per cwt. Dairy producers need to remember that the July Class I price will be an important, but not the only, factor influencing revenues derived from the sale of their milk produced during the month of July. Since about 60-70 percent of Louisiana and Mississippi milk is processed into Class I products, farmers should expect slightly more milk sales revenues when they receive their settlements checks in mid-August as the final payment for milk produced and sold in July.

Advanced Class I Milk Price @ 3.5% bf	Price per Cwt. in North Central MS	Price Diff Vs July 2003	Percent Change Vs July 2003
July 2003	\$12.87	---	---
June 2003	\$12.84	↑\$0.03	↑0.0%
May 2003	\$12.81	↑\$0.06	↑0.1%
July 2002	\$13.72	↓\$0.85	↓6.2%
July 2001	\$18.44	↓\$5.57	↓30.2%

NUTRIENT COMPOSITION AND STORAGE LOSSES OF BAHIAGRASS STORED AS INDOOR HAY, OUTDOOR HAY, OR BALEAGE

M. E. McCormick and B. C. Venuto

Southeast Research Station, LSU AgCenter

Baleage technology is being widely adopted by dairymen in southern Louisiana and Mississippi. Annual ryegrass has been the predominant forage used for baleage production, but interest in summer perennials such as bahiagrass is growing. Two studies were conducted to determine the feasibility of storing 'Argentine' bahiagrass as baleage. Bahiagrass and other summer perennials are known to be low in water soluble carbohydrates (WSC) needed for successful silage production. In the first study, four randomly located 1.6 ft² quadrants of bahiagrass were harvested at 0700, 1100, 1500, and 1900 hr to assess the effect of time-of-day on plant WSC levels and nutrient composition. Bahiagrass dry matter increased from 20.6% at 700 hr to 28.2% by 1900 hr. Sugar concentrations were also substantially higher in afternoon than morning-harvested forage; 2.7 vs. 4.3% (fresh wt.) at 700 and 1900 hr, respectively. Bahiagrass samples collected at 1900 hr contained lower neutral detergent fiber concentrations than those obtained at 700 hr. **Results indicated that afternoon harvest improved plant sugar concentrations and increased overall energy content in the forage.**

A second study was conducted to evaluate the effect of storing four-week old bahiagrass as outdoor-stored hay, indoor-stored hay, or baleage. A 12-acre field of bahiagrass was harvested with a mower conditioner (1400 hr) and allowed to wilt 24 hr for baleage production and 48 hr for hay production. A minimum of six bales were produced for each storage system. Baleage was produced by wrapping 4' x 4' round bales with six layers of white stretch film. Bales were weighed and core-sampled at harvest time and core-sampled again following a six-month storage period. Hay stored outdoors had a 12.8% loss in dry matter (DM) loss compared to a 2.9% DM loss for indoor-stored hay. Storage losses for baleage were less than 1% of DM. Acid detergent fiber concentrations increased during storage by 7.2% in outdoor-stored hay compared to 1.6% and 2.0% for indoor-stored hay and baleage. This indicated net energy of lactation losses during storage were 2.3 times greater for outdoor-stored hay compared to indoor-stored hay or baleage. Storage system did not effect plant crude protein concentrations (avg. = 13.1% of DM). **Results indicated nutrient composition of bahiagrass stored indoors as hay or as baleage was greater than for bahiagrass stored outdoors as hay. Storage losses for bahiagrass stored either as baleage or stored indoors as hay were dramatically lower than bahiagrass stored outdoors as hay.**

Properly storing your grass hay is one way to maintain the quality of the forage, dramatically lower your storage losses and significantly lower your overall feed cost.

2003 CORN SILAGE CROP

Dr. Charles Hutchison

Dairy Science Dept., LSU AgCenter

Harvest time for the 2003 corn silage crop is drawing near or has already started if you can get in the field with all the rain that we have had in South Louisiana lately. The quality of this year's crop will be very good for some producers and poor for others mainly depending on if the corn received adequate amounts of rainfall at the crucial stages of growth and development. There is very little that you can do about the corn silage crop at this stage of the game. However, dairy producers need to come up with a strategic plan for feeding this year's corn silage if the quality is low or if you have less silage than your needs. **The most important point is to start now instead of waiting until you open the silo and start feeding.**

The following are some things to consider when developing the plan. During the first third of harvest take a grab sample of silage from several different loads and make a composite sample, have it analyzed for nutrient content. Repeat the procedure during the next third and last third of harvesting. This should give you a good indication of the quality of the silage that you will have in the silo to feed this year. After harvest, estimate the amount of silage on an as fed basis that you have in the silo, then take an average of the dry matter percent on the three samples that you had analyzed and calculated the pounds of silage dry matter that you have in the silo. Next, estimate the amount of silage on a dry matter basis that you will need for the coming year and compare that to the amount that you have in the silo.

If the nutrient content of the corn silage this year is low or the amount needed is inadequate and corn silage is the primary forage in the diet, then there are several items to consider. How much corn silage is left from last year and how does the quality compare to the crop this year? If last years corn silage is higher quality than the new corn silage, a producer may want to consider ways to conserve it until more cows are in early lactation. Once the new silage is ready to feed (21 to 28 days) after harvest, a producer may want to start feeding (Take another representative sample and have it analyzed for nutrient content and dry matter. Use the analysis from this sample in ration formulation) it to the herd and stop feeding last year's if the majority of the cows are in late lactation and hold the better silage until more of the herd is in early lactation. Another option is feeding from both the old and new silages to stretch the length of time that the better quality silage will last. However, be sure that you can remove enough silage from the face of each silo daily to keep the silage fresh and avoid possible palatability and intake problems. Also, if the cows are divided into different production groups, then feed the lower quality silage to the lower producers.

Are you feeding corn silage as part of the ration to your heifers? This is another area where you can conserve the better quality silage by feeding the lower quality or by removing the silage from heifer's diet all together. Another method would be to try to increase your ryegrass acreage for grazing if possible to help supplement the lower quality silage. Take an inventory of the quality and quantity of the other stored forages on the farm. Using the above information, make a decision if purchasing some more high quality forages (alfalfa hay, ryegrass baleage, other higher quality corn silage) might be the best alternative. Then start working on having a good ration in place when the majority of the herd is in early lactation.

Public Hearing Notice

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is holding a public meeting on July 25, 2003 at 1:30 pm in the Room C111 of the Galvez Building at 602 N. Fifth Street, downtown Baton Rouge.

The purpose of the meeting is to receive oral comments on proposed amendments to Louisiana water quality regulations being sought to comply with federal regulations related to concentrated animal feeding operations. These federal regulations are applicable to Louisiana and are designed to ensure that CAFO's take appropriate actions to manage manure effectively in order to protect the state's water quality. The proposed rule would require all CAFO's to apply for a Louisiana Pollution Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) permit and develop and implement a nutrient management plan specific to the operation. The proposed regulation would also designate which animal feeding operations are not regulated under the permit process. For more information on which animal feeding operations will be required to file for an LPDES permit, contact your local county agent's office.

LSU DAIRY SCIENCE CLUB AWARDS BANQUET

The LSU Dairy Science Club and Dairy Alumni Banquet was held on April 26 in the Faculty Club on the LSU Campus. Approximately 140 students, parents, faculty and supporters from the dairy industry were present. The purpose of the banquet is to highlight Dairy Science Club activities during the year, recognize dairy science scholarship recipients, and honor two individuals for their dedication and service to the dairy industry.

The program began with a presentation by the Dairy Science Club which summarized the year's activities. This was followed by the recognition of dairy students who had received departmental or dairy alumni scholarships during the year. Twenty-three dairy science students were presented with certificates in recognition of the scholarships they had received. The average amount of the scholarship was \$1,750.

Each year several students are recognized for their dedication and efforts as a member of the Dairy Science Club. The awards are voted on by club members, and each student is presented with a plaque in recognition of their achievement.

Tony Bridges of Haynesville, La was recognized as Outstanding First Year Member. Tony is a sophomore with a major concentration in dairy production.

Rebekah Blades of Kentwood, La was recognized as the Outstanding Senior. Rebekah graduated in May with a concentration in dairy foods technology and is planning to enter Graduate School in the Fall. She is also the current President of the National Student Affiliate Division of the American Dairy Science Association.

Matt Summers of Rayville, La was recognized as Outstanding Club Member. Matt was the outgoing president of the Dairy Science Club. Matt graduated in May with a concentration in dairy foods technology.

Jason Lavigne of St. Bernard, La and **Andra Ponson** of Slidell, La each received scholastic achievement awards for having the highest overall grade point average. Jason is a sophomore with a concentration in dairy production. Andra graduated in May with a concentration in dairy production and will enter the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine in the Fall.

Each year the Department of Dairy Science, the Dairy Science Club and the Dairy Alumni Association recognizes two individuals for their outstanding service and dedication to the dairy industry. This year **Mr. Ed Joiner** was recognized as Dairyman of the Year for his outstanding service to the Louisiana dairy industry through his work as Chairman of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Dairy Committee. **Dr. Ronald H. Gough** was recognized as Honorary Lifetime Member for over 30 years service to the Dairy Science Club, the Dairy Science Department and the Louisiana Dairy Industry. Pictures of these individuals are displayed for a year in the entrance to the Dairy Science Building and permanently displayed in the Dairy Science Conference Room along with the pictures of previous recipients.

DAIRY EXTENSION PROGRAMS IN LOUISIANA

The LSU AgCenter's dairy extension program is dedicated to providing educational programs that benefit the state's dairy producers. Two statewide dairy extension professors located in the Department of Dairy Science in Baton Rouge have unique expertise areas and provide statewide programs in Dairy Herd Improvement and related record keeping, mastitis management, reproductive management, nutrition and feeding management coupled with training in computer ration balancing, and financial management.

There are also three specialized dairy agents serving in Northwest and Southeast Louisiana. These agents are readily accessible by producers in the four Louisiana parishes where 90% of the state's dairy farms are located. They provide or assist state extension professors in providing extension programs related to raising replacement heifers, estrus synchronization, body condition scoring, transition and dry cow management, and harvesting and storing of forages. They also conduct demonstrations on dairy lagoon clean-out, calibrate fertilizer spreading equipment, provide pesticide applicator certification programs, test and check milking equipment, and many other things.

Two AgCenter scientists located at the Southeast Research Station also have joint extension appointments. These faculty work with producers to analyze forage and feed samples at the Forage Quality Laboratory and then advise producers in dairy and beef ration formulation as well as management of forage crops to improve yield and quality with the aim of improving milk and beef production. In addition, one AgCenter scientist and other staff members at the Hill Farm Research Station provide milk culturing and technical advice on mastitis control for dairy producers in Louisiana.

LSU AgCenter dairy research and extension faculty routinely participate with dairy producers in local and statewide dairy organizations and events such as Parish Dairy Days, the Joint Mississippi-Louisiana Dairy Herd Management Conference and the Louisiana Dairy Fieldman's Association. The LSU AgCenter continues its longstanding commitment to assist the Louisiana dairy industry to be profitable, sustainable, and environmentally friendly.

2003 4-H Short Course Dairy Judging Contest

Congratulations to the team from Jeff Davis Parish for winning the Dairy Judging Contest during the 2003 4-H Short Course. The team members are Eric Brown, Katie McClelland and Thomas Buller. All three of these team members placed in the top ten as individuals with Eric Brown winning top individual honors for the contest. These three 4-H members along with Erin Loupe from Sabine, second high individual in the contest, will form the Louisiana 4-H Dairy Judging team. They will go to Madison, Wisconsin in October to compete in the National 4-H Dairy Judging contest.

The Dairy Judging contest at 4-H Short Course had 16 parish teams and 8 individuals from 5 different parishes competing. The top ten teams and individuals are listed below.

Rank	Team	Score*	Rank	Individual	Parish	Score**
1	Jeff Davis	1170	1	Eric Brown	Jeff Davis	402
2	Lafourche	1110	2	Erin Loupe	Sabine	399
3	St. Helena	1104	3	Jeremy Mouch	W.B.R.	399
4	Lafayette	1090	4	Brittani Davis	Lafourche	396
5	Assumption	1087	5	Colorado Robertson	St. Helena	393
6	Washington	1083	6	Thomas Buller	Jeff Davis	392
7	Sabine	1071	7	Tabitha Kerbow	Washington	388
8	Webster	1050	8	Amanda Magnon	Lafayette	387
9	Desoto	1007	9	Joelle Templet	Assumption	387
10	Iberia	1002	10	Katie McClelland	Jeff Davis	376

*Total Possible Score: 1350

**Total Possible Score: 450

Congratulations to all the contestants and their coaches for a very competitive contest in 2003!

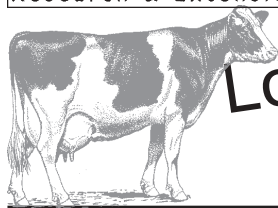
TOP HERDS BY AVERAGE TEST DAY ENERGY CORRECTED MILK (ALL COWS)

NAME	DATE	BR	COWS	DIM	ECM	FAT%	PRO%	RHA
EUGENE ROBERTSON	05/16	H	161	177	59.6	3.6	3.0	20308
CLIFFORD CHAMPLIN	05/06	H	220	113	57.8	3.5	2.9	19314
TO-BEV FARMS	04/30	H	194	163	57.5	2.8	2.7	19871
BRAD AND GLYNDA TONEY	05/21	H	69	131	57.1	3.1	2.8	20743
GALEN NIGHTINGALE	05/21	H	77	241	56.9	3.1	2.7	20904
JOHNSON & LITWILLER	05/22	H	83	215	56.0	2.8	2.9	20300
J PAUL ALFORD	05/05	H	112	233	55.7	3.5	2.9	19094
HALL BURFORD	05/13	H	163	203	55.6	3.2	2.9	19631
O B MITCHELL	05/28	X	63	193	55.6	3.0	3.0	19451
LADD BLADES	05/15	H	222	176	55.2	3.5	2.9	19303
LSU DAIRY	05/29	H	50	272	55.1	3.3	2.9	16855
SE LA EXP STATION	05/21	H	200	167	54.9	3.5	2.9	21257
BOBBY GOINGS	05/27	H	102	163	54.8	3.5	2.8	17513
LOUISIANA TECH DAIRY	05/16	H	43	173	54.2	2.8	2.9	20968
DARYL & MARYJO ROBERTSON	05/19	H	94	221	53.8	3.7	3.2	22393
HOLLIS BANKSTON & SONS	05/28	H	88	220	51.5	3.8	3.1	17698
BROWN DAIRY FARM	05/21	H	169	183	51.5	3.1	2.9	18552
KARIE AND BRAD BLADES	05/27	H	177	303	50.5	3.4	3.1	17642
LEESFIELD DAIRY FARM	05/13	H	97	163	50.3	3.1	2.9	15957
UDDER FRESH	05/13	H	116	208	50.0	3.3	3.3	16713
FRANCIS HOLMES	05/26	H	64	179	49.9	3.4	2.8	16980
ANDREW R. HERRING	05/29	H	308	196	49.4	3.7	3.1	18009
J W DOC SCHILLING	05/02	H	134	173	49.3	3.4	3.2	14924
LOUISIANA TECH DAIRY	05/16	J	40	152	49.1	3.7	3.3	15137
FARMER'S DAIRY	05/14	H	51	274	48.8	3.3	3.0	17739
MARVIN FLETCHER	05/14	H	157	210	48.5	3.0	2.8	18351
PHILLIP ROBERTS	04/29	X	110	156	47.8	3.5	3.2	14919
JOHN FAUNCE JR DAIRY	05/06	H	215	185	47.7	3.3	2.9	16691
DUSTY SCHILLING	05/28	H	96	159	47.4	3.4	2.9	17743
PHILLIP ROBERTS	04/29	H	171	168	47.1	3.1	3.0	16366
RAYMOND SCHMIDT	05/15	H	86	215	47.1	3.3	2.9	19200
CHARLES A BURFORD	05/27	H	159	152	47.1	3.6	2.7	16464
NED SIMMONS	05/15	H	149	124	46.3	3.7	3.1	14458
MAYFIELD'S DAIRY	05/18	H	34	138	46.0	3.6	3.0	12844
CIRCLE G FARMS	05/23	H	155	189	44.8	3.3	2.9	16986
HILL FARM RESEARCH STATION	05/15	J	67	190	44.7	3.6	3.6	13839
ROBERT POTTS	05/19	H	163	188	44.0	3.3	3.0	15837
MARK WASKOM	05/21	H	98	212	43.3	3.6	3.0	16972
DONALD DUNCAN DAIRY FARM	05/13	H	51	193	42.7	3.3	2.9	15085
GLENN MAGEE	05/22	H	98	187	42.7	3.3	3.1	17291
CLINTON STEVENS	05/07	H	136	208	42.3	3.3	3.0	13964
IVERY REED	05/14	H	68	174	42.2	3.5	3.0	15052
M & B DAIRY FARM INC.	05/12	H	143	158	42.1	3.2	2.9	15075
BANKSTONS UDDERWISE DAIRY	05/01	H	58	151	41.8	3.2	3.0	14139
NOLAN D ALFORD	05/13	H	122	188	41.5	3.7	3.1	15770
MICHAEL W GUY	04/30	H	55	258	41.2	3.6	3.1	13914
ROYCE SALLEY	04/29	X	263	115	40.7	2.3	2.9	14604
CREEL DAIRY	05/07	H	155	192	40.2	3.5	2.8	13059
FIVE R FARM	05/05	H	92	226	39.7	3.2	3.1	12882

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