



Dairy Product Prices Survey



United States Department of Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistics Service

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts a weekly survey to estimate prices for dairy products (Cheddar Cheese, Butter, Nonfat Dry Milk, and Dry Whey). Each week, dairy processors are asked to report the prices received for the previous week.

HOW ARE THE DATA COLLECTED?

The Dairy Product Prices Survey is conducted weekly for cheddar cheese, butter, nonfat dry milk, and dry whey. Depending upon the product surveyed, data may be gathered from individual processing plants, headquarters covering numerous plants, and marketing cooperatives. Data collection methods include:

- Fax – Participants fill out and fax back the questionnaire.
- Internet – Secure online reporting is the timeliest, most cost-effective option.

HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

NASS publishes a weekly *Dairy Product Prices* report that includes data on approximately 100 plants and 4 commodities. All sectors of the U.S. agricultural industry – dairymen, buyers, suppliers, policymakers, and others – rely on dairy product prices data to make sound business decisions. For example:

- Dairy Product Prices data are used in calculating the Advance Prices and Pricing Factors as well as the Class and Component Prices, which set the Minimum Price for fluid milk.
- Dairy Product Prices data are a component of USDA's Parity Index, which measures the economic well-being of producers and is useful for designing the Farm Bill's financial safety-net programs.
- Federal and state agencies use price data to project revenues and the need for public services.
- Dairy associations and elected representatives need Dairy Product Prices data to lobby for legislation that promotes and supports U.S. Dairy agriculture.
- Agribusinesses use income estimates derived from prices surveys to evaluate markets for location, expansion, and contraction of their business activities.

WHY SHOULD DAIRY PROCESSORS RESPOND TO THE SURVEY?

- Dairy processors and their customers depend on dairy farmers being able to provide a steady supply of milk. The entire supply chain form a kind of partnership, and accurate data representing the value of their products is essential for the dairy supply chain's survival with rising input costs.
- The Federal Milk Marketing Order helps to add stability to the dairy farm economy through the many different programs. In order for the programs to be accurate, unbiased data is essential for proper allocation for these programs.

This law specifically protects the confidentiality of your report from public disclosure except as directed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture or the U.S. Attorney General for enforcement purposes to ensure compliance with the Dairy Product Mandatory Reporting program.

All reports are available through the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.