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Hot off the press!

Keeping Farms from Closing: Balancing Milk Composition with Yield

The consolidation of dairy farms continues at an alarming rate! The main cause is that the price of milk at the farm gate does not put enough food on the farmers' plates. Is there a way to keep our farmers in situations that allow more dairymen to subsist (and succeed)?

"Composition of our milk supply at the farm level needs to shift to match composition of dairy products that consumers are purchasing," according to an article in Hoard's Dairymen.¹

Basically, the critical context here is to shift from a focus on yield to a focus on content. Some efforts in this area have been made in the industry, but they need to be accelerated. Jack Britt, a Fellow with the American Society of Animal Science suggests:

- **Shifting to 4.2% fat & 3.2% protein (from 3.8/3.14)**
- **Make this the new payment basis**
- **Realize a raise of >\$1/cwt!**

In addition to keeping farms from closing, this would reduce processing capacity pressure and take almost 200,000 semi-tanker loads off our roads! The market is demanding less fluid drinking milk and more milk as an ingredient in value added products. That means higher fat and protein levels to provide optimal quality and yields in these products.

1. Britt, Jack, "Balance the milk supply with fat and protein",
Hoard's Dairyman, April 10, 2019

