

Milk Report: Information Sheet

Overview

- Project code: 178 – Milk Production Survey
 - Reference Dates: Jan 1, Apr 1, Jul 1, and Oct 1
- Mails out: 8-10 days before the 1st of each survey month
 - Data Release: Milk Production: about 3 weeks after the reference date
All NASS reports can be found at:
<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/index.php>

A milk cow will generally produce 20 to 80 pounds of milk per day. However, a dairy can produce more than 80 pounds of milk per cow per day, especially if they milk 3 times per day.

-A note should be left if less than 20 pounds or more than 80 pounds of milk was produced per cow.

Watch out for dairy operations that have every other day milk pickup—they may report the total amount shipped (for 2 days) rather than just what was produced in 1 day.

Cows milked may be equal to total milk cows, but will usually be less, particularly in commercial dairy operations. Typically, 80 to 90% of the operations milk cows will be milked on any given day. The rest will be dry and preparing to have a calf at which time they will be put back in the milking herd.

It is becoming more common for operations to raise *only* dairy replacement heifers and not actually milk any cows. Leave notes if you encounter an operation who only raises replacement heifers.

Milk cow replacement value – we are looking for the total value per head. We are looking for the value of milk cows that could be placed in the milking herd. We are not looking for the value of cull cows that are being removed from the herd.

Terms and definitions:

- Milk Cow = A female bovine that has had at least one calf, regardless of breed, kept primarily to produce milk for human consumption, either for home use or for sale
- Dry Cow = a cow that is not currently being milked
- Freshen = when milk production begins after a calf's birth
- Calving = when a cow gives birth to a calf
- Mastitis = inflammation of a dairy cow's milk ducts while she is lactating. Usually caused by bacteria and can be treated with antibiotics
- Bulk tank = large refrigerated tank to cool and store milk until it can be picked up by a milk hauler
- Cull cow = a dairy cow that is removed from the herd and sold. After a certain age, dairy cows do not produce as much milk as desired.

Ask questions and leave notes if there is a large change in the number of milk cows on the operation (if previously reported data is provided).

Ask questions and leave notes if a large amount of milk is used for home consumption or fed to livestock.

OUT OF BUSINESS: Watch out for the operations that say they are “out of business” or are “no longer milking” BUT have actually just quit the dairy business. If they still have crops, hay, other livestock, etc. they are *still* in business.