

AMS NEWS RELEASE

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USDA ANNOUNCES FINAL PARTIAL DECISION TO AMEND MIDEAST MILK ORDER

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 20, 2006 - The U. S. Department of Agriculture today announced a final partial decision that permanently adopts amendments to the pooling provisions of the Mideast milk marketing order that were previously implemented on an interim basis. This decision is based on testimony and evidence given at a public hearing held at Wooster, OH, on March 7 – 10, 2005.

The adopted amendments prohibit the ability to simultaneously pool the same milk on the Mideast Federal milk order and on a marketwide pool administered by another government entity, increase supply plant performance standards, and lower diversion limit standards.

USDA will conduct a vote on the amended order to determine producer approval. If producers approve the order as amended by this final decision, a final rule will follow to implement these changes on a permanent basis.

The decision will appear in the Jan. 23 Federal Register. For additional information about the decision contact: David Z. Walker, Market Administrator; USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs; P.O. Box 5102, Brunswick, Ohio, 44212; Tel. (330) 225-4758; e-mail: dwalker@fmmaclev.com.