

AMS NEWS RELEASE

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USDA ISSUES AMENDMENT TO THE HEARING NOTICE FOR A HEARING IN THE MIDEAST FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDER

WASHINGTON, March 2, 2005 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that a public hearing being held to consider proposals to amend the Mideast Federal milk marketing order will no longer be hearing proposals regarding the producer-handler provision. The hearing will still begin at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 7, 2005, at the Shisler Conference Center, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, 1625 Wilson Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691.

Kenneth C. Clayton, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said that due to unforeseen circumstances, the portion of the hearing notice published in the Federal Register (70 FR 8043) regarding the producer-handler provision will be heard at a future date.

Proposals that will still be considered at the hearing include: eliminating the ability of the same milk to be simultaneously pooled on the Mideast order and on a state operated order with marketwide pooling; changing the supply plant performance standards and diversion limits; increasing the number of days a dairy farmer's milk production must be delivered to a pool plant for the milk to be eligible for diversion; limiting the pooling of producer milk that was not pooled in a prior month(s); establishing a "dairy farmer for other markets" provision; and establishing a transportation credit for milk.

The hearing notice withdrawal will be published as a proposed rule in the March 3, 2005, issue of the Federal Register. Copies of the hearing notice withdrawal may be obtained from the USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs, STOP 0231 - Rm. 2971, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0231. The original hearing notice and the withdrawal are available on AMS' Web site, at: www.ams.usda.gov/dairy.

The hearing notice and withdrawal and information about the hearing is available from the market administrator office, as follows: David Z. Walker, USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs, P.O. Box 5102, 1325 Industrial Parkway North, Brunswick, Ohio 44212 Tel. (330) 225-4758; email: dwalker@fmmaclev.com