

# A Final Report on the Cull Cow Dairy Pilot Project

Source: Jackie Wepruk, Faunus Consulting and Divakar Ambrose, AAFRD



The pilot project, *Determining the Value of a Centralized Processing System for Cull Dairy Cows*, officially ended at the end of July 2004. However, due to a fire at North West Foods (the processing plant in Edmonton used for the project) on July 5, the delivery of cull dairy cows for slaughter ended at that point.

The Rimbey Auction assembly point had a reasonable level of participation, with 153 cows going through the assembly point. The Triple J Auction assembly point in Westlock was not well used, with only 25 cows handled there. By far the most popular option was direct delivery, with approximately 782 culled dairy cows delivered to North West Foods between November 2003 and June 2004.

A Centralized Processing System (CPS) provided an additional option for cull cow disposal. In particular, the 24-hour kill guarantee ensured timely and humane disposal of lactating cows without having to dry them prior to shipping. Economically it was difficult to make direct comparisons, but overall, the live-weight price paid at the auction and the rail-grade price paid by North West Foods were quite comparable, given the relative condition of the animals.

North West Foods was satisfied with the functioning of the assembly points and had been willing to take over the organization of loads through the assembly points upon completion of the pilot project. As disposal options for cull dairy cows remain limited, it is

likely that use of the assembly points would have increased with time. Just prior to the fire, there was a two-week waiting period to get animals into the plant due to demand.

At this point, options for cull cow disposal are very limited. XL Beef in Calgary is currently the only federally inspected plant in Alberta accepting cattle over 30 months of age.

The owners of North West Foods are working with the City of Edmonton to be able to rebuild the plant in the same location. Costs to rebuild are estimated at \$25 million. The plant is tentatively set to re-open in spring 2005 with an increased kill capacity of 2000 animals per week. At that time, the assembly points may be re-implemented to facilitate the pick-up of cull cows from more distant locations.

Listed below are the Class 5 prices calculated by the Canadian Dairy Commission.

September 2004 Class 5 Prices (\$/kg)			
Milk Class	Butterfat	Protein	Other Solids
Class 5a	5.9868	6.5062	0.3151
Class 5b	5.9868	2.0522	2.0522
Class 5c	3.3740	2.0000	2.0000
Class 5d	contract by contract price		
Class 4m	contract by contract price		

## wanted

**Buyer** for six calf condo/hutches, 18 months old. Individual housing with adjustable roof/front for changing weather conditions. Comes with pails for water and starter, and six pint bottles. **Please call Greg at 780-387-5697.**

**Buyer** for one Dutch Opraap wagon, 2000 gal. DeLaval milk tank, one double - six Boumatic milk parlour with automatic take-offs. **Phone 604-858-7863.**

Highly experienced relief milker. Will provide references upon request. **Phone Katelyn Fehlauer at 780-987-2465 and leave message.**

### Alberta Fluid Milk Price Formula Calculations

	Alta Dairy Feed \$/tonne	Alta Hay Price \$/tonne	Alberta Farm Wage Index	Fuel & Utilities Input Index	Machine Equip. Price Index	Building Constr. Price Index	Int. Rate	GDP Inflation Rate	W. Can. Milk Con. /month	Comp. Index	Comp Price \$/hL	Price Set by A.E.U.B. \$/hL
	21	14	16	4	3	6	4	22	10	100		
Sept 04	245.56	91.86	1948.75	2.09	92.7	126.1	3.87	114.5	7.64	97.03	68.79	
Aug 04	262.56	93.70	1972.78	2.10	90.4	123.0	3.91	113.0	7.64	97.52	69.14	69.11
July 04	267.50	90.02	1963.06	2.00	90.4	123.0	3.95	113.0	7.81	97.85	69.38	68.13
June 04	264.74	87.47	1963.65	1.92	90.4	123.0	4.00	113.0	7.81	97.21	68.92	68.13

