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USDA SETS HEARING ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CLASS III AND IV PRICE FORMULAS FOR ALL FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDERS

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 7, 2000 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture invites dairy farmers, cooperative associations, milk handlers, and consumers to testify at a USDA hearing beginning May 8 in Alexandria, Va., on proposals to amend the Class III and Class IV price formulas for all Federal milk marketing orders.

The hearing will start at 8:00 at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 1900 Diagonal Road, Alexandria, Va., and is expected to last for several days.

Kathleen A. Merrigan, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the hearing is required by legislation enacted in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000. Under the legislation, USDA is required to reconsider the Class III and Class IV price formulas included in the final rule for the consolidation and reform of Federal milk orders. USDA must implement the revised formulas on Jan. 1, 2001.

Merrigan said the hearing will consider proposals that address changes to the factors included in the pricing formulas, such as the specification of the products whose prices are identified, the yield factors, and the make allowances included in the computation of the component prices.

The hearing notice will be published in a future issue of the Federal Register. Copies will be available from USDA/AMS/Dairy Program, Order Formulation Branch, Room 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 720-4392. The hearing notice is also available on AMS'

web site, at: www.ams.usda.gov/dairy.

The hearing notice and information about the hearing is also available from market administrator offices, as follows:

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