

AMS PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

AMS No. 004-02

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USDA TO HOLD HEARING ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO WESTERN AND PACIFIC NORTHWEST MILK ORDERS

WASHINGTON, March 1, 2002 - The United States Department of Agriculture invites dairy producers, milk processors and the public to testify at a hearing on proposals that would amend certain pooling and related provisions in the Western and Pacific Northwest orders. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, April 16, 2002, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the Hilton Hotel, Salt Lake City Airport, 5151 Wiley Post Way, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84116-2891,

Dairy producers who provide Class I (drinking milk) to the two markets requested this hearing.

The hearing will include proposals intended to prevent the simultaneous pooling of the same milk on more than one marketwide pool for both the Western and Pacific Northwest orders. Other proposals under consideration would make additional changes in pooling standards for the Western order. These proposals include determining pool supply plant qualification on a "net shipment" basis, increasing the cooperative pool plant performance standard, eliminating the proprietary bulk tank unit provision, reducing the diversion allowance for producer milk, establishing transportation and assembly credit provisions, and assuring that Class I handlers pay uniform prices for raw milk. Three other proposals intended to improve the clarity of the Western order's pooling provisions will also be considered.

Details of the proposals and notice of the hearing will be published in the March 4 *Federal Register*. Copies may be obtained from the Pacific Northwest and Western milk marketing order office, USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs, 1930-220th Street, S.E., Suite 102, Bothell, Washington 98021-8471.

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