



State of Connecticut
Department of Agriculture
Milk Regulation Board

MILK REGULATION BOARD REGULAR MEETING

**State Office Building
165 Capitol Ave., Room G-8A
Hartford, CT 06106**

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Draft Minutes

Agenda Item #1, Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 A.M. by Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky.

Agenda Item #2, Introductions:

Milk Regulation Board members present:
Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky, Gregory Peracchio, Michael Young, Neil Marcus, Peter Orr, Jack Tiffany, Christine Applewhite (Representing the DPH Commissioner) and Lucy Nolan.

Milk Regulation Board members absent:
Mae Schmidle and Jim Stearns

Others present:
Dr. Bruce Sherman and Jason Bowsza (Department of Agriculture)

Agenda Item #3, Correspondence: None

Agenda Item #4, Approval of 10/21/15 Minutes:

The minutes of the October 21, 2015 regular meeting were approved unanimously on a motion made by Jack Tiffany and seconded by Greg Peracchio.

Agenda Item #5, Reports:

Commissioner Reviczky indicated that there were no initiatives in the Department's 2016 legislative proposals that would directly affect the dairy industry.

Commissioner Reviczky reported that Congress enacted legislation that will allow Connecticut and certain other states to increase bulk milk truck weight limits. It gives states the option to issue permits to milk haulers to increase their truck weights beyond the current Interstate Highway System limits. The permits, however, would still need to comply with each state's trucking laws. Connecticut Department of Transportation (CONNDOT) has indicated that it plans to implement the federal changes on April 1, 2016. The commissioner and Jason Bowsza provided a brief history of the work that took place over the past few years and emphasized the importance of an amendment to the transportation bill co-sponsored by Congresswoman Esty in reaching this goal. The Commissioner stated that he had met numerous times while in Washington with the state's Congressional delegation to emphasize the importance of allowing increased milk truck weight limits in reducing milk hauling costs for dairy farmers. The issue had been a priority for Governor Malloy and a topic of discussion at a number of NASDA policy meetings.

Commissioner Reviczky indicated that prior to April 1, 2016 the CONNDOT will issue permits to haulers for the increased weight limits on a daily basis. Beginning April 1, they plan to be able to issue account codes to qualifying haulers that will allow them to haul at increased weights. In addition, CONNDOT will be mapping out safe and acceptable routes for haulers with increased weight permits from each CT dairy farm.

AgriMark has estimated that the change will result in a decrease in hauling costs of 15 to 20 cents per cwt. Mike Young indicated that haulers taking advantage of the new increased truck weight limits should adjust their rates to assure that farmers are the beneficiaries of the resultant lower hauling costs. He estimated that it would result in approximately 5 less milk tankers daily hauling into the Guida plant.

Commissioner Reviczky discussed the legislature's enactment of Public Act No. 15-101, the Connecticut "Herd Share Bill, the rather vague provisions of the bill and distributed copies of the testimony offered by the Department in opposition to it based on public health concerns. This Public Act authorizes the transfer and exchange of raw milk between people who are parties to a shared animal ownership agreement. Christine Applewhite, representing the Department of Public Health, said that her agency intends to introduce legislation during the 2016 session to repeal the bill.

Commissioner Reviczky reported on the Department's efforts over the last few months as the lead state agency in planning and preparing for a coordinated and effective response to HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) incident if detected within the state or in neighboring states.

Commissioner Reviczky informed members of the State Tax Panel Final Report that could lead to proposed changes that could negatively affect Public Act 490.

Commissioner Reviczky reported that the dairy sustainability fund received \$30,000.00 more this quarter than last to grant to producers. Peter Orr emphasized the importance of the payments to dairy farmers in light of a poor economic outlook for the next year with the farm price of milk projected to be \$16.50/cwt. Jack Tiffany said that the price of beef has dropped adding to the poor economic outlook.

Peter Orr said that some good news is that dairy products are getting better press from a nutritional standpoint.

Jack Tiffany expressed his concern that a U.S. House of Representatives bill that would have pre-empted states from requiring GMO labeling was not included in the Omnibus Farm Bill.

Agenda Item #6, Old Business: None

Agenda Item #7, New Business:

Jack Tiffany informed the members of a legislative proposal that authorize the state to establish a list of violators of animal cruelty laws.

Agenda Item #8, Public Comment: None

Agenda Item #9, Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 A.M. on a motion by Neil Marcus and seconded by Greg Peracchio.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce A. Sherman, DVM, MPH
Director, Bureau of Regulation and Inspection