MPC Weekly Friday Report

Date: July 17, 2020
To: Directors & Members
From: Kevin Abernathy, General Manager
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MPC Friday Market Update

Chicago Cheddar Cheese		
Blocks	*- $.2550*	$2.6600
Barrels	*+ $.0900*	$2.4300
Weekly Average Cheddar Cheese		
Blocks	*+ $.0535*	$2.8320
Barrels	*+ $.0420*	$2.4180

Chicago AA Butter		
Weekly Change	*No Change*	$1.6900
Weekly Average	*- $.0005*	$1.7090
Dry Whey		
Dairy Market News	w/e 07/17/20	$.3450
National Plants	w/e 07/11/20	$.3467

Non-Fat Dry Milk		
Week Ending 07/11/20		
Nat'l Plants	$0.9675	16,502,301
Prior Week Ending 07/04/20		
Nat'l Plants	$0.9767	15,167,262

California Federal Milk Marketing Order Price Projections

Price Projections	Class I Actual (range based on location)	Class II Projected	Class III Projected	Class IV Projected
July 17 Est	**$18.16 - $18.66**	**$13.60**	**$24.26**	**$13.82**
Last Week	**$18.16 - $18.66**	**$13.52**	**$24.20**	**$14.04**

June 2020 CA FMMO Statistical Uniform Price Announcement

June '20 Final	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Statistical Uniform Price (Blended Price)	Net Price After Quota Assessment*
Minimum Class Price	**$13.02 (*Tulare*) $13.52 (*L.A.*)**	**$12.99**	**$21.04**	**$12.90**	**$12.63 (*Tulare*) $13.13 (*L.A.*)**	**$12.265 (*Tulare*) $12.765 (*L.A.*)**
Percent Pooled Milk	**24.4%**	**7.7%**	**0.7%**	**67.2%**	**100% (1.71 billion lbs. pooled)**	

**Quota rate of $0.365/cwt. as of June 2020 milk*

Milk, dairy and grain market commentary

By Sarina Sharp, Daily Dairy Report
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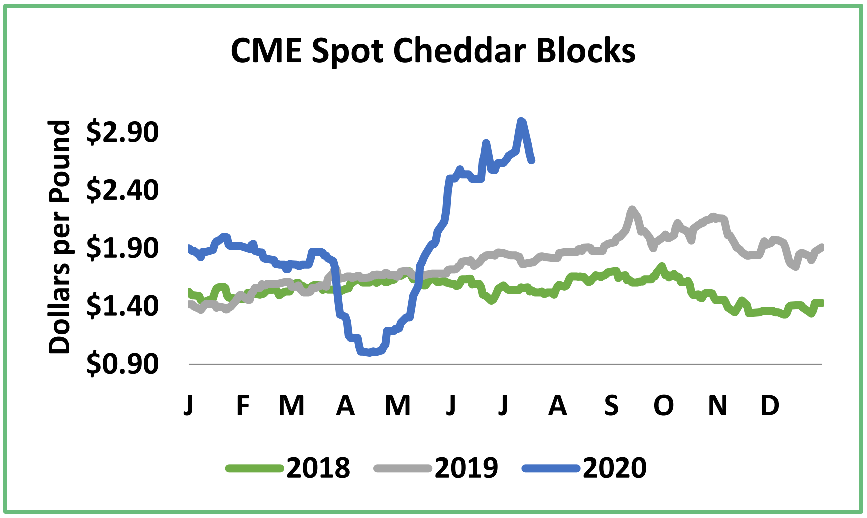
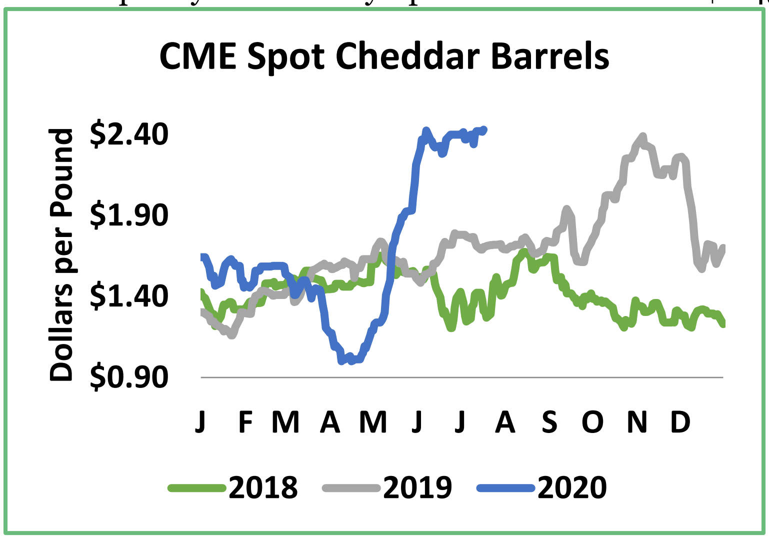
Milk & Dairy Markets

CME spot Cheddar blocks came charging out of the gate this week. On Monday they sprinted 8.5¢ straight uphill, to a record-shattering $3 per pound. Their journey to that point is an astounding feat of strength and stamina. In fewer than three months, blocks climbed $2, from a 17-year low to a record high, with barely a pause for breath along the way. But $3 is clearly high enough. On Tuesday, blocks took a small step back from the peak. On Wednesday, they plummeted 19¢ without a single bid to cushion their fall. Blocks settled today at a still lofty $2.66 per pound, down 34¢ from Monday's high and down 25.5¢ from last Friday. By the end of the week, prices had fallen far enough to attract buyers, with two loads changing hands Thursday and five on Friday. These orders reassured futures traders that demand remains intact and muted the late-week losses for cheese and Class III futures.



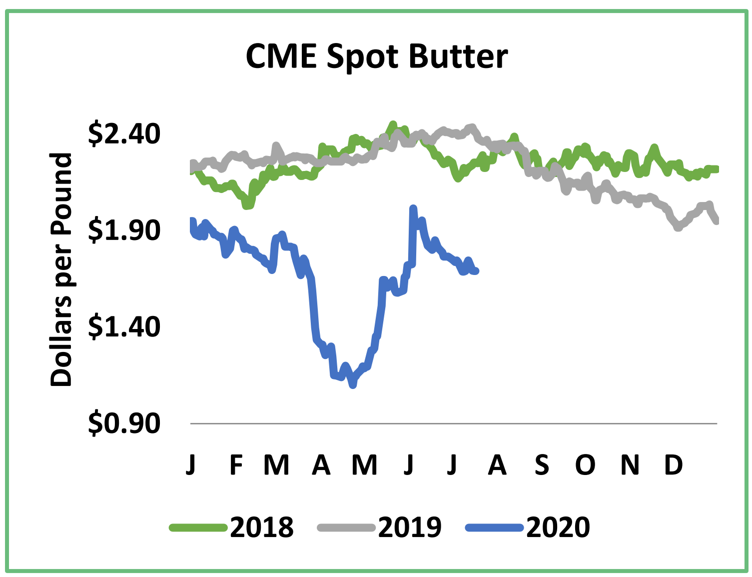
Barrels also helped to undergird the futures market. Aside from a small misstep on Thursday, they moved quietly but steadily upward and closed at $2.43, up 9¢ this week to the highest value in nearly six years. Although restaurant orders have once again retreated, retailers are still stocking up on cheese and USDA's donations to food banks continue apace. USDA's *Dairy Market News* reports that demand is strong, but some buyers are going hand-to-mouth, in hopes that the recent selloff will continue. Cheese vats are full to the brim.

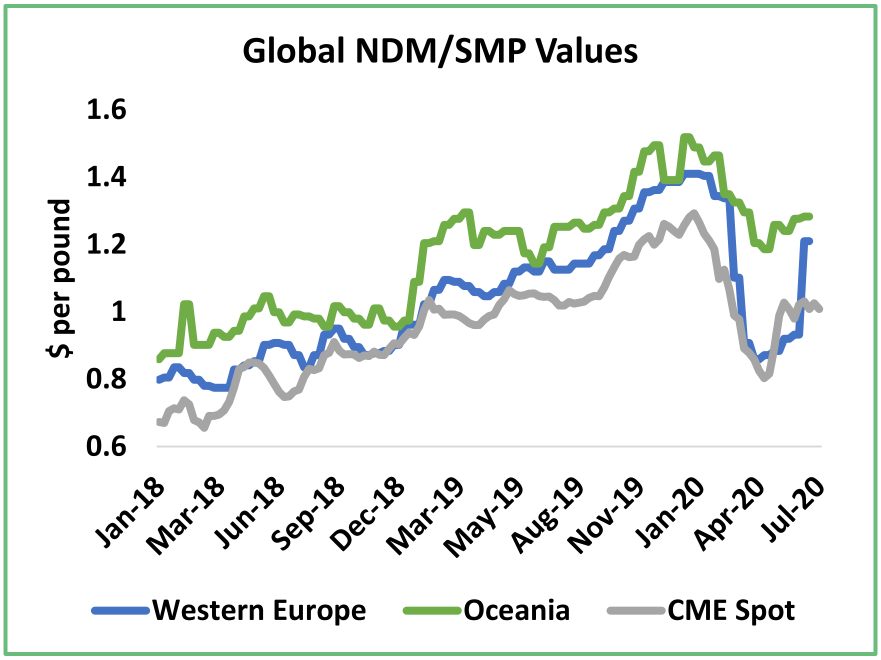


More cheese means more whey, and buyers know it. They are getting pickier on pricing, and USDA reports lower values around the country. Nonetheless, both the futures and the spot market gained ground this week. CME spot whey climbed 4.75¢ to 33.5¢ per pound.

As blocks deflated, the air seeped out of Class III futures. However, the late arrival of buyers in the block market and advances in barrel and whey pricing helped to patch up the major holes, allowing for a slow leak rather than an all-out collapse. Most Class III futures contracts lost around 20¢. The August contract dropped 55¢ to $22.49 per cwt. Class IV futures also finished roughly 20¢ to 30¢ in the red, but they are far removed from the exalted realms of their Class III counterparts. August Class IV dropped 40¢ this week to $14.05.

CME spot butter jumped early in the week but just as quickly faded. It finished at $1.69, steady





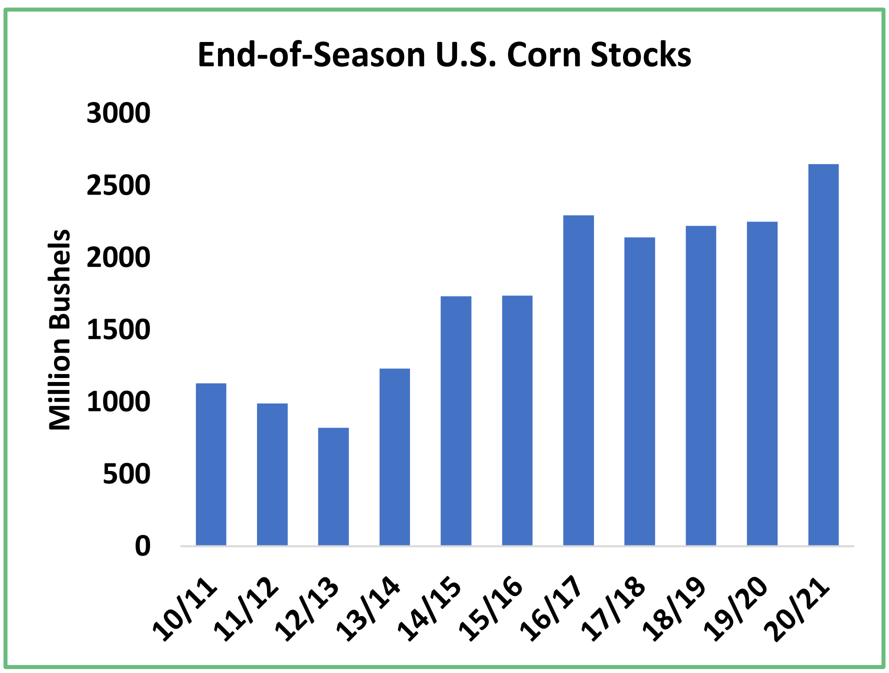
with last Friday. Restaurant closures are weighing on demand, and production is ample despite relatively pricey cream.

CME spot nonfat dry milk (NDM) slipped 1.75¢ this week to $1 per pound. Cheesemakers are adding gobs of NDM to their vats, but sales to other users have slowed. Skim milk powder (SMP) prices are rising abroad, and the dollar is losing ground, making U.S. NDM exceptionally competitive. However, sales south of the border are intermittent, as the pandemic drains the vigor from the Mexican economy.

Dairy producers rushed to the mailbox this week to open and hastily cash their June milk checks. In the Class III regions, they – and their creditors – were likely elated. Elsewhere, however, dairy producer revenue was severely watered down by depooling and the much lower Class IV market. Sky-high milk prices are encouraging dairy producers to top up their tanks, but for some, the payout is much lower than they had hoped.

Grain Markets

The feed markets were mixed this week. September corn futures fell 3.25¢ to $3.33 per bushel. August soybeans rallied 11¢ to $8.98. The forecast is generally favorable, with scattered rains across the Corn Belt next week. But farmers in the Southern Plains and southwestern Corn Belt could see a little less moisture than they would like. This year's crop will likely be respectable but not perfect, which will provide more than enough grain and oilseeds to meet demand.



The soybean markets got a boost this week from rising global vegetable oil prices and from another round of sizeable Chinese purchases. China is buying U.S. corn too, but there is less potential for Chinese demand to meaningfully reduce U.S. corn inventories. Chinese buyers could soon exhaust the nation's self-imposed tariff-rate quotas (TRQs), and all corn purchased outside of this year's quota will suffer a stiff border tax. Unless China chooses to waive the tariffs, Chinese purchases of U.S. corn are likely to be helpful but far from transformative. The U.S. is likely to have far more corn than it needs.

Water Tidbits

By Geoff Vanden Heuvel, Director of Regulatory and Economic Affairs
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Keeping an eye on water supply is a big part of what I do for Milk Producers Council. What follows are some tidbits I have learned along the way.

The new Federal Biological Opinion, which is guiding the operation of the federal water projects in the Delta, is under legal challenge by the State of California and environmentalists. In May, the opponents asked for and received an order from a Federal District Court Judge in Fresno that forced federal officials to suspend their pumping from the Delta for three weeks. You can read about that here. In June, the State and environmentalists were seeking another injunction related to Shasta Dam releases for temperature that would have reduced water supply. In this case, the same **federal judge declined to rule in the State's and environmentalist's favor**. Right now, there are no more pending requests for temporary injunctions and the underlying legal challenge to the Biological Opinions is winding its way through the legal system. Since the State filed its lawsuit in February, the discussions between the parties have come to a standstill. It is unlikely anything will change in Delta operations before the election in November.

In this relatively dry year, **Friant class 1 water users will get a 65% supply**. That is better than expected due to some late rain and the use of an airplane survey of the snowpack in the Sierra mountains that gave the Bureau of Reclamation better data on water content of the high elevation snow that conventional snow gauges cannot pick up.

Meanwhile great **progress is being made on fixing the pinch point on the Friant/Kern Canal**. This 140-mile canal provides vital surface water supplies to the eastern San Joaquin Valley. Over the past few years, a multi-mile portion of this gravity powered canal has sunk near Porterville due to land subsidence. The carrying capacity of the canal downstream of the pinch point has been reduced by half. Fixing the canal has become a bipartisan bright spot. California Senator Diane Feinstein along with Democratic and Republican members of Congress are pushing federal funding to assist in this repair. State Senator Melissa Hurtado has led the effort to provide State funding, although with the State budget in shambles, it is not likely that the state will be able to do much in the near term. The cost is over $400 million, and the hope is to break ground on the fix before the end of the year.

As for the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the various Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) are implementing their plans. Some notable tidbits include:

A **Kern GSA offered $300 per acre** for a one-year fallowing commitment and got no takers. They are now soliciting bids from their farmers looking to fallow 200 acres. It will be interesting to see what price per acre farmers will need to take out ground.

The **Tule Subbasin GSA near the Friant canal pinch point is being "asked" to pay $260 million** over the next 15 years to compensate for the additional subsidence damage to the canal that is expected to occur from their continued groundwater pumping. Not surprisingly, one of the major landowners in that area is challenging the science that points the finger at them.

Two of the five **Tulare Lake Subbasin GSA's have hired a high-powered Sacramento government relations** firm for $12k per month to represent their interests. It is not unusual for big water agencies to have lobbyists, but this is new for GSAs.

Two of the **Kaweah Subbasin GSAs received comment letters from the Animal Legal Defense Fund** that made the assertion that the dairy industry was using too much water and demanded that these GSAs stop this wasteful use of precious water resources. Dairy Cares, on behalf of the industry, provided a detailed response to this letter which you can read here.

In the **Kings Subbasin, the GSA with the largest shortfall** in surface water, a very proactive leadership is moving quickly to get better well and water usage data and aggressively pursues projects to bring in more surface water. While the facts on the ground are tough for this GSA, aggressive leadership provides hope that solutions can be found to minimize the negative impacts that could be the result of groundwater regulation.

In the Madera subbasin**, all the GSAs have now signed-off on the Coordination agreement** which takes away the threat of immediate state control. The difficult discussion about water rate structures and the allocation of groundwater is beginning. There are no easy answers and the governance structure in Madera County, where the Board of Supervisors is the governing board of the major GSA, makes this challenge even more difficult.

Both the Madera Subbasin and the Chowchilla Subbasin have irrigation districts with surface water resources. But those **districts are not flush with water** and will not likely be able to fully satisfy the needs of their neighbors who are not part of the districts.
On the other hand, there was a significant positive development this week in the Merced Subbasin. The Merced Irrigation District (MID) has been around for a long time and has developed significant surface water supplies. This week the **MID board approved a resolution authorizing the sale of up to 40,000 acre feet per year** of surface water to local agriculture water users that are outside of the district boundaries. The water will not be cheap – the price is $300 per acre foot – but it should be reliable. The initial term would be for 10 years, renewable for another 5 years. The MID board also approved offering current class II MID water users the opportunity to buy class I status for a one-time payment of $5,900 per acre. Class II water users are entitled to one-half of the allocated per acre surface water as class I users and this fact has made land with class I status in the MID service area worth about $5,900 more per acre according to land sales data. It is expected that the value of surface water supplies will increase over time and so setting the one-time fee at the average of historical sale price differences is what the board used to justify the fee amount.

As these developments indicate, **SGMA is a game changer**. Access to surface water is a huge factor in how this law will impact individual landowners. The rights to surface water and the infrastructure to deliver it are in the hands of the water districts, many of whom formed decades ago and invested the money and effort to develop those supplies. As a practical matter, the access to surface water in the future will flow through those districts. As Merced ID has now demonstrated, under the right circumstances they are willing to help, but the undistricted lands must be willing to pay. Nothing about this is easy, but progress is being made.