



CENTER FOR
Dairy EXCELLENCE
Dairy Week In Review



Dated April 15, 2026

Dairy Prices	Price	Chge. from Week Ago	Chge. from Month Ago	Chge. from Year Ago
Class III Milk Price (Apr.)	\$ 16.97/cwt.	▼ 2.1 %	▲ 4.9 %	▼ 1.9 %
Class IV Milk Price (Apr.)	\$ 20.20/cwt.	▼ 1.4 %	▲ 4.2 %	▲ 12.6 %
Corn (May)	\$ 4.43/bushel	▼ 1.3 %	▼ 2.4 %	▼ 7.9 %
SBean Meal (May)	\$329.7/ton	▲ 5.7 %	▲ 5.8 %	▲ 12.1 %
DMC Margin (Feb.)*	\$ 8.46/cwt.	—	▲ 8.3 %	▼ 35.5 %

*Each issue of "Dairy Week in Review" will report on the most recent Milk Margin published through USDA's Dairy Margin Coverage Program. This margin is published each month after the USDA Ag Prices Report is released.

Markets:

- Based on the most recent USDA Livestock Slaughter report, U.S. dairy cull cows numbers are down 9,500 head from January's 246,800 to 237,300 head in February. However, if you break it down further, January averaged 12,340 head slaughtered per non-holiday business days while February averaged 12,473 head. When compared to February 2025, February 2026's dairy cull cow numbers are up just over 20,000 head.
- Since the beginning of 2026 through the end of March, weekly dairy cow slaughter totals remained within the range of 52,000 and 61,000 head, which is well above last year's range of 42,500 and 51,500 for the same timeframe. Regionally, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia dairy cow slaughter numbers combined totaled 33,800 and 33,400 head for January and February, respectively. For the same states, their dairy cull cow numbers were recorded at 48,200 in January 2025 and 44,100 head in February 2025, down 14,800 and 10,700 head, respectively.
- On the national level, we are still seeing dairy cull cow numbers elevated from 2025, but as less dairy cows are moving into the region and dairy heifer replacement costs remain high, more farms are hanging onto their existing dairy cows. For January 2026, national milk cow prices averaged \$2,860 per head, up \$200 from the same month the prior year and up \$970 from January 2024's average price.
- Live cattle futures are projected to trend downward from \$252 to \$229 from April 2026 through October 2027. Over the past month, live cattle prices grew by 8.3 percent up 22.0 percent when compared to the same timeframe last year. For the remainder of 2026, current Class III milk futures show the price increasing to \$18.95 per cwt in October, then dipping slightly to \$18.23 in December. Recent Class IV milk futures forecast the price reaching \$21.55 per cwt in May, fluctuating until July at \$20.54, then decreasing to \$18.80 in December.

Government/Industry:

- Coming up, the Center for Dairy Excellence, Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania, PA Beef Council, and Penn State Extension are collaborating to host Animal Care Workshops in Franklin and Somerset counties in April. Each on-farm workshop will feature four sessions led by industry experts and educators covering animal handling and meat quality issues, calving issues/dystocia, down cows/transition cows, and farm safety. The workshops are free and count towards FARM program continuing education credits. There will also be Spanish translation services available. Lunch will be provided. To read more about the workshops or to register, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/events.
- On June 11, the Dairy Excellence Foundation will host their annual "A Toast to Dairy" event at Melhorn Manor in Mount Joy, PA, from 6 to 9 p.m. All proceeds from the event directly support the Foundation's dairy education programs, scholarships, internships, and more. This farm-to-fork event features food stations, tasting passports with samples from local wineries and breweries, guided cheese tasting experiences, a photo booth, caricature artists, and other fun surprises. Tickets are \$85 per person with group discounts available, but if you purchase your tickets by May 1, you will get \$10 off each ticket. With 400 people attending last year, buy your tickets now before they sell out. Visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/toasttodairy to purchase your tickets today.