

CENTER FOR DairyEXCELLENCE

Dairy Week in Review

October 28, 2026

Dairy Prices	Price	Chge. from Week Ago	Chge. from Month Ago	Chge. from Year Ago
Class III Milk Price (Oct.)	$15.24/cwt	-0.7%	-5.3%	-9.9%
Class IV Milk Price (Oct.)	$20.39/cwt	--	+6.9%	+44.1%
Corn (Dec.)	$4.49/bu	-3.9%	-14.0%	+3.9%
SBean Meal (Dec.)	$334.6/ton	-5.7%	-7.1%	+9.2%
DMC Margin (Aug.)	$9.34/cwt	–	-14.2%	-14.6%

**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 Milk Production report, U.S. milk production totaled 58.5 billion pounds for July through September 2026, a 2.3 percent increase from last year's third quarter. For the same quarter, the U.S. milking herd averaged 9.72 million head, up 39,000 head from the second quarter of 2026 and up 172,000 head from the third quarter of 2025.
- For September 2026, the U.S. milk output rose 2.6 percent from September 2025 to 19.4 million pounds. The national average milk production per cow was 1,996 pounds, up 18 pounds year over year. In September, the U.S. milk cow numbers averaged 9.74 million head, down 26,000 head from the all-time high in July 2026 but up 169,000 head from the numbers in September 2025.
- Looking at the individual state, Kansas continues to experience tremendous growth in their dairy sector with a 14.7 percent growth year over year in milk production and a 29,000-head increase to their milk cow numbers. South Dakota's milk supply and milking herd also saw significant growth, up 7.9 percent and 17,000 head, respectively, from September 2025 to 2026. Down South, Georgia's milk production grew by 7.1 percent year over year. While the Peach State's milk cow numbers saw a modest increase of 3,000 head, the growth is more directly tied to a notable 70-pound increase in the monthly average milk production per cow.
- For September, Pennsylvania experienced a slight 0.5 percent increase year over year in milk production to 786 million pounds. Even though the Keystone State's milk cow numbers are down by 3,000 head, the state's monthly average milk output per cow was up by 20 pounds from September 2025 to 2026.

Government/Industry:

- The Center will be accepting applications for their Dairy Productivity & Excellence Grants through Sunday, November 1, 2026. The Dairy Productivity Grant will provide awardees with up to $10,000 (with a 25 percent match) for first-time investments in milking efficiency, feeding, and activity monitoring technologies, including but not limited to robotic milking technology, TMR mixers, and boluses. The Dairy Excellence Grants can provide up to $5,000 (with a 50 percent match) to fund projects that improve cow comfort, milk production per cow, and overall efficiency. These grants are competitive, and awardees will be notified by November 20, 2026. To read more about these grant programs or apply, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/grants.
- On November 12, the Center and Penn State Extension are hosting the "Passing the Torch: Next-Level Transition Planning Workshop" from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Bird in Hand, Pa. This transition workshop will go beyond the basics, and participants will learn about pre- and post-nuptials, a more in-depth discussion of business structures and plans, success stories and case studies, and dealing with unxepected losses. The workshop includes lunch and time to work one-on-one with advisors. To learn more, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/events.

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