

We Sure Could Use Some Extended Sunshine!

Robert N. Barley, Chair

The sun is shining this morning. That doesn't seem like a big deal. However, Pennsylvania dairy farmers are struggling to get in the fields to get their crops planted. We seem to be in a similar pattern to last year. Hopefully, the coming week brings us some good weather.

As I was thinking about this, I was contemplating the places where the sun is shining on the dairy industry and where it still seems dark. We seem to get a glimmer of price improvement then the China trade dispute rains on the markets. We have seen some significant herd reduction here in the Northeast. The darkness comes from the fact that this is mainly due to farmers going out of business. Cows are being culled, but who culls high producing cows? The cows that remain seem to only increase their production. We have seen some minor improvement in demand, but we need a cultural change to truly make a difference.

I am looking at an article outlining all the great choices for lactose intolerant people. However, last week I read an article that many older Americans are switching to fake milks due to digestive issues. As the PMMB engages our Pennsylvania milk dealers and processors, we are finding that they are doing the best they can to innovate within their small budgets.

So as the title of this article states, we need a prolonged period of (sunshine) success in the dairy industry. I am confident we are making progress, but we need to continue to produce a quality product, innovate for an everchanging market, and share the wonderful Pennsylvania Dairy Story.