

PA Milk Marketing Board
Carol A. Hardbarger

PA Milk Marketing Board – More Than a Name!

Rob, Jim and I often receive suggestions on things we could do better to market Pennsylvania milk. When that happens, I explain that even though our name suggests that we are a marketing organization, we are really the Commonwealth's milk regulatory board! However, most people don't realize that we provide some services above and beyond milk pricing and licensing milk dealers. I want to provide you with some information about one of those services—certifying the people who pick up milk at the farm, which helps ensure a safe, wholesome milk supply. Producers are also paid based on observations and measurements taken by these individuals who are known as “weigher/samplers.”

Pennsylvania law states that a milk processor may not purchase milk from a farm unless the milk has been sampled and tested by a certified Weigher and Sampler. The Board provides prospective weigher/samplers with a training guide, and one-on-one or small group training with a member of our field staff, which is followed by an examination. If the person earns a score of at least 80 percent, then he/she is certified by the Milk Marketing Board. We also encourage the trainee to spend some time with someone already certified.

Once certified, the weigher/sampler may pick up milk from a farm and deliver it to a processing plant. After making certain that the truck and all sampling equipment are clean and working properly, the weigher/sampler

- Performs a visual inspection of the milk in the farmer's tank for fat particles, flakes or any extraneous matter and for off odors.
- Measures depth of milk in tank and records corresponding number of pounds using a calibration chart.
- Measures the temperature of the milk; milk will be rejected if the temperature exceeds 40 degrees F.
- Collects a sample of the milk using sterile equipment and stores it at the proper temperature.
- Pumps milk from the bulk tank into clean truck and rinses the bulk tank when empty.
- Delivers milk to a processing plant within 72 hours that first milk was placed into bulk tank. Samples of the milk are provided to the processor's laboratory for testing.

The process to ensure a safe, healthy milk supply is taken seriously by everyone involved in the chain of supply. Staff of the Milk Marketing Board check the handling of samples and verify records created by the weigher/samplers. If any weigher/sampler is found to mishandle milk samples or to falsify or change records, he/she could be subject to certificate revocation. We are proud to be part of this process and proud of our certified weigher/samplers who do such a great job!

PMMB is always willing to respond to your questions and concerns. I can be reached at 717-219-8244 or by email at chardbarga@pa.gov.