

# CALL FOR MILK INQUIRY

## Producers Want "Books Opened" So Consumers Can Get Truth.

### CONFER WITH U. S. OFFICIALS

**Committee Shows That Dairymen  
Should Get One Cent More a  
Quart — Representatives Assert  
That Middlemen Are Making the  
Profits—Investigation This Fall.**

An impartial inquiry into the cost of production of the milk supplied this city will show that producers should receive 1 cent a quart more than they get now, that dealers can sell milk for the same price they get now and make reasonable profit, and that the consuming public, therefore, should not suffer any increase in market price now prevailing.

This was the opinion of officials of the Department of Agriculture, Dr. William C. Woodward, of the health office of the District, and the "committee of seven," of the Milk Producers' Association of Maryland and Virginia, which met at the Munsey building yesterday afternoon to start an investigation into the production cost of milk.

#### Producers Point to Burdens.

The meeting yesterday was of momentous importance to producer and consumer. It developed that what this city needs, the committeemen said, is to open the book, so to speak, that the public may judge of the situation arising now with the question of a threatened increase in price of milk.

The producers say that they are bearing the brunt of the burden of cost with impossible profits. They claim that with their new summer price of 15 cents a gallon, and with their winter price of 21 cents a gallon for their product they cannot exist and make reasonable profits.

They welcomed the cooperation of the Department of Agriculture, which announced Wednesday it was to institute a nation-wide investigation to determine the average cost of milk production on farms throughout the country.

Dr. W. J. Spillman, chief of the farm management bureau of the department, met with the committee yesterday, and reassured the members that the department was going to begin its investigation early this fall.

#### Ask for Local Investigation.

They asked Dr. Spillman if he could make possible an investigation of the production cost of the local supply, and he is quoted as saying he would do so if possible.

They welcome also an opportunity to meet with representatives of milk dealers here to place squarely before them the question as to how producers are to make profit out of a business which does not net an adequate return on investment. A meeting may be arranged for Tuesday afternoon at 1:30 o'clock at the Munsey building.

It was said for the committee yesterday that the producers feel that their burden was not shared by the milk dealer. The producer submits that between the 6 cents average a quart he gets for milk and the distribution price it sells for somebody along the line of middlemen is getting an unjust profit.

#### Would Open the Books.

This profit can be readily compromised, they hold, so that the producer can "get in," and the public would not have to bear the burden of increased price.

"You must positively state," one committeeman said, "that we do not consider our proposed fight for a fair profit to imply in any way that the ultimate consumer is to pay extra for milk."

"Let the middle man, whoever he may be, concede in compromise, and the whole matter will be fairly adjusted. We want to open the book. We want the public to judge whether our case is meritorious. They shall see through our investigations."

#### Sympathize With Producers.

Officials were apparently in sympathy with the producers. They admitted that the increased cost of feed for cattle, the increased price of labor, the increased price of cows, &c., had imposed such a tax on the producer as to warrant his fight.

The results of an investigation lately by Food Commissioner Dillon, of New York, were cited. It was shown by his reports that the average cost of production of a quart of milk in New York State is 4½ to 5 cents. This average is probably general, it is said.

#### Personnel of the Committee.

Judson Welliver, of this city, was appointed chairman of the committee of seven yesterday, vice Westmoreland Davis, of Leesburg, Va., who resigned. The personnel of the committee also includes McGill Belt, of Dickinson, Md.; William H. Chambers, Barnesville, Md.; Hermann E. Gasch, of this city; H. F. Walker and J. W. Bowman, both of Virginia. The committee represents 1,600 producers.

Meeting with the committee yesterday were Dr. Spillman, chief of the bureau of farm management, and B. H. Rawe, chief of the dairy division of the Department of Agriculture; Dr. W. C. Woodward, health officer, and Mr. Potts representing the office of markets of the Department of Agriculture.