



# Idaho Dairy

THE IDAHO DAIRY FOCUS IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
IDAHO DAIRYMEN'S ASSOCIATION

*focus*

April 2010

*The Idaho Dairymen's Association (IDA) was established to continue to develop and sustain an economically viable Idaho Dairy Industry that works together to achieve success in the domestic and global marketplace in meeting the needs of the Idaho dairy farm families.*

## EPA Overreaching Authority on GHG Emissions Regulatory Authority by Senator Mike Crapo

In recent years, the federal government has encroached into many aspects of our personal and business lives—from bailing out various industries to setting up an enormous federal health care bureaucracy. And some of its plans will squarely hit the dairy industry. From Environmental Protection Agency mandates to threatened changes to the Clean Water Act, I encourage the Idaho dairy industry to continue to inject your voices into federal policies. The Administration has moved to regulate greenhouse gas emissions administratively, under the Clean Air Act through finalizing an “endangerment finding,” declaring that greenhouse gases pose a threat to public health and welfare. That **finding** gives EPA the authority to move forward on regulations aimed at curbing the heat-trapping emissions. The next step will be for the EPA Administrator  
(Continued on page 2)



## View from the Board Room—The Three P's by IDA President Mike Roth

This past week the Idaho Dairymen's Association (IDA) had a meeting that provided an opportunity for producers to meet together to give direction on what the Idaho Dairymen's Association should be doing to address the ongoing dairy crises we are all struggling with. The impetus for establishing the meeting was you, fellow Idaho dairy producers contacting board members and staff members expressing concerns over the continued depressed prices they are receiving and wondering what action if any the IDA is taking on behalf of producers.

Because of that input the officers of IDA decided to hold a meeting to provide a forum for producers to discuss with other producers what actions would be appropriate and how much of a desire there is by producers to take a serious look at a voluntary or mandatory supply management programs. This issue of the Idaho  
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to issue individual regulations to regulate these emissions, such as rules to regulate greenhouse gases from motor vehicles' tailpipes and large industrial sources, like power plants.

I obviously have very serious concerns with EPA's use of the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, for several reasons. First, the Clean Air Act was not designed to regulate something as extensive as greenhouse gas emissions, which literally reach every corner of our economy. Using this law to regulate these emissions would simply be devastating for our economy and for anyone and anything that emits these gasses. Entities ranging from schools, to hospitals, to small and large businesses and farms would be adversely affected.

The likely outcomes of this regulatory approach are of great consequence, and I remain very concerned about the strategy that the Administration and its allies are using: the threat of the Clean Air Act to force Congress into passing the ill-advised "cap and trade" bills that have failed to earn the approval and support of the American people.

My good friend, Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, who is the Ranking Member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, recently introduced a resolution that would effectively veto the agency's endangerment finding, thereby prohibiting these or related rules from going into effect. I am a strong supporter and original co-sponsor of this resolution.

My concerns also extend to recent activity regarding S.787, the so-called "Clean Water Restoration Act." This bill represents a blatant major expansion of government regulatory power over Idaho's water sovereignty. Simply put, the bill would greatly expand the power of the EPA and others to come onto your property and aggressively regulate water sources that you need for your livelihood. This bill is highly controversial, and I will fight it until it is dead.

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expansion of government regulatory power over Idaho's water sovereignty. Simply put, the bill would greatly expand the power of the EPA and others to come onto your property and aggressively regulate water sources that you need for your livelihood. This bill is highly controversial, and I will fight it until it is dead. Rather than increasing environmental mandates, the best way to achieve environmental success is through working with landowners. The Farm Bill conservation programs and tax incentives to assist landowners with endangered species habitat are a far more productive way to improve our environment through landowner involvement.

I appreciate the efforts of the Idaho Dairy-men's Association and enjoy working with your membership regarding the issues that come through Congress. It is important to me and to Idaho that the Idaho dairy industry achieve success in both domestic and global markets, and you have my commitment to continue to work with you to achieve and sustain those goals.

### Rick Haines back on the Air

**Good News for the Dairy Industry and Rural Idaho. Starting in Mid April Rick Haines will be back on the Air!! Rick and Bob will be back on Monday mornings on..... **KLIX 1310 AM**.....the time frame is still being determined but the content is locked in. It will be the same great format as before with dairy industry and legislative news pertinent to your operations.**

**In addition coming soon will be the "Rural Advocate" web site where you can listen to Ricks radio show at your convenience where Rick will be providing "Constant News for RURAL America"**

## **NMPF Setting a New Course for Dairy Policy**

**By Jim Tillison**

The National Milk Producers Federation is in the process of working on a plan called Foundation for the Future. The reason for this effort is that current dairy policies and programs were designed in an earlier time to operate in a relatively closed domestic market. However, today's market for U.S. dairy farmers' milk is greatly influenced by global demand and supply, as the record prices of 2008 and their disastrous plunge in 2009 clearly demonstrated. The market for dairy products is global, and world's influence on milk prices is growing with each passing year.

The federal dairy policies and programs in the future must include a new and comprehensive approach which allows U.S. dairy producers to take advantage of this changing and expanding market. Producers must be permitted to reap the rewards of higher average prices resulting from the increased demand for milk and dairy products while maintaining a sufficient measure of income protection and stability.

The Foundation for the Future program is looking at changes in the Federal Order milk pricing system, changes in producer safety nets, and in the role of supply and demand balancing programs like CWT.

Federal Milk Market Order Reform. The goal of this effort is to develop a pricing system that compensates producers fairly, reduces price volatility, and creates a more dynamic dairy industry. The objectives are to address the inequities and inadequacies of current product price formulas and encourage movement of milk to its highest value uses.

Production Management. The goal is to develop methods to manage supply and demand by revitalizing Cooperatives Working Together and evaluating other approaches that will address the extremes in price volatility impacting producer profit margins. The subcommittee charged with bringing forward concepts did not endorse the Dairy Price Stabilization Plan favoring instead trigger level approaches that are less subjective blended with elements of the CWT programs. A number of parameters have been developed which will be used to evaluate production management approaches.

Dairy Producer Income Protection. A key element of NMPF's Foundation for the Future is replacing the Dairy Product Price Support Program and the MILC program with a new safety net that allows milk producers to insure against negative profit margins, something that neither of those programs came close to achieving in 2009. In developing the Dairy Producer Income Protection Program, a few important principles are being followed:

Losses caused by either low milk prices or high feed costs need to be covered.

Producer cost for basic protection must be kept low or nonexistent.

The level of protection available should be flexible, and producers should be able to purchase a higher level of protection if they choose.

The program should be voluntary, national in scope, and open to all dairy farmers, regardless of size.

The program should not provide incentives to create artificial over-production.

The program must be easy to access by all producers through a simple application process or through the assistance of their cooperative.

All of these potential changes will ultimately require a new way of thinking about dairy industry economics. NMPF is not underestimating the size of the shift in attitude necessary on the part of producers to give these proposed programs a fair evaluation. However, if there is one lesson to be learned from the past year, it's that change is needed.

## “Immigration Reform that helps growers, consumers, economy”

*It is Time to move Immigration Forward with Ag-Jobs.*  
 BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIAN (EDITORIAL)  
 Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Immigration reform, and the lack thereof, has been a political hot potato in recent years. For some, immigration is a cheap tool to wind up those whose buttons are easily pushed. Others use it to deflect attention from pressing issues.

At long last, it appears we have a real shot at getting it right- improving the lives of immigrant workers, satisfying labor-hungry industry, adding a new layer of security and accountability, and sanding some of the sharp corners off of a contentious issue.

That is if law makers don't muck it up.

California Senator Dianne Feinstein is sponsoring the Ag-Jobs bill, and she has bipartisan support. She can count on Senator Richard Lugar (R-IND), and some Representatives in the House for farm heavy states, with the push.

The plan will open a way to “temporary” permanent residency for illegal immigrants who have worked in Ag for the last two years, if they remain in farm work for another three. Their immediate families will be eligible to live and work in the U.S., and to travel freely to their homeland. Later, they may apply for permanent-resident status, with a few procedural hoops to jump through.

Remarkably, Ag interest- including the California Farm Bureau-and their historic foe, the United Farm Workers of America are both on board. When was the last time they agreed on anything?

“I know a lot of western growers are in favor of it,” said Matthew Park, Executive Director of the Kern County Farm Bureau, The California Farm Bureau's local chapter.

The Obama Administration, which would wel-

come another legislative victory, has sent a clear signal that it wants to get it done.

“We've been close to getting it passed for years,” UFW President Arturo Rodriguez said in a brief interview with *The Californians* editorial board earlier this month, “But we feel like this is really the year to do it.”

Farm workers will have the opportunity for a better life than the one they fled in their homelands- and legally so. That's good for our economy. Ag interests will be able to count on a ready labor force. That's good for the economy, too. And will have a greater measure of security knowing who's in this country, and for what ostensible purpose.

As always, there will be determined resistance, some of which will be powered by the intellectual dishonesty, half-truths, blatant appeals to public fear and rage, and - this is key- the real possibility that national leaders will fail, once again, to control the debate.

The Democrats, for example, have proven virtually incapable of shaping opinion.

Voters should, if for no other reason, consider the positive effect this program will have on the national economy. Jobs, even those of the menial variety, mean consumer spending, without which America suffers. It would also hold down the price of produce.

Rodriguez said, “It's in everyone's best interest for a broken system to change, as the United States is importing more food than it exports.”

“That doesn't help growers, it doesn't help farm workers, and it doesn't help consumers,” he told the editorial board. “It's very hard to control pesticides, how workers are treated, and food safety when food is produced over seas.”

Let's hope this is one initiative that withstands the barrage of attacks that are certain to come.

## **Congressman Walt Minnick Sets Meeting with Treasure Valley Dairy Producers**

On Friday April 9<sup>th</sup> an informational meeting is being hosted by the Idaho Dairymen's Association and Darigold with U.S. Congressman Walt Minnick. Congressman Minnick will spend the morning touring a dairy followed by a time to meet with dairy producers and answer their questions on issues important to the Idaho dairy industry.

Date: Friday April 9, 2010  
 Time: 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM  
 Location: Darigold  
 520 Albany Street  
 Caldwell, ID

Congressman Walt Minnick serves on the House Agriculture Committee, the Dairy Subcommittee and is a member of the bipartisan Congressional Dairy Caucus along with Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson.

Congressman Walt Minnick grew up near Walla Walla, Washington, on his family's dryland wheat farm. He earned an economics degree from Whitman College in his hometown. From there he continued his education and graduated from Harvard Business School and Harvard Law School after which he spent two years in the U.S. Army. From there he went to work in the White House Office of Management and Budget under the Nixon administration.

Congressman Minnick business career included establishing Summerwinds, a company which has grown into one of the 10 largest retail-nursery chains in the country. He resigned as chairman of the board after winning election to Congress in November 2008.

## **District I and District III Producer to Producer Meetings**

These meetings are restricted to dairy producers. In order to provide adequate preparation and meals for the meeting Please call 208-733-6372 ext 102 and leave a message for which meeting you will be attending and how many from your operation will be attending or e-mail the information to [bob@wdbs.us](mailto:bob@wdbs.us) .

### **District I (Treasure Valley)**

Date: Tuesday April 20, 2010  
 Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm  
 Location: Shilo Inn/Shilo Inn  
 Restaurant  
 1411 Shilo Drive  
 Nampa, Idaho

### **District III (Eastern Idaho)**

Date: Thursday April 22, 2010  
 Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm  
 Location: Red Lion Hotel Pocatello  
 1555 Pocatello Creek  
 Road  
 Pocatello, Idaho

The meetings are being conducted to provide a forum for producers to discuss short term and long term dairy supply programs that Idaho dairy producers could unite behind. The program will be facilitated by Mike Roth, President of IDA and UDI board members from your district.

We will begin with an overview of proposed national program changes and supply management proposals which would address identifying a long term solution. This portion of the program will be conducted by Adrian Boer, a dairy producer from Jerome Idaho who serves on the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) Board of Directors and is a member of the NMPF Dairy Supply Management Committee, formerly the CWT Committee. That will be followed by identifying any potential short term programs that could immediately lower supply; this portion will be facilitated by Mike Roth. Following the discussions a written producer opinion survey will be distributed; the survey will be combined with surveys completed in the other districts to determine if and how IDA should move forward in addressing the short and long term proposals of supply management.

(continued from page 1—the 3 P's)

Dairy Focus contains articles on the meeting (found below) and the results of the survey found on page 7 . Because of the valuable input we gained at the meeting we will be holding similar meetings in District I and District III in the third week of April (see meeting information on page 5.)

One of the items that will be difficult if not impossible to replicate at the upcoming meetings is the opening of the meeting by Father Ron from the St Jerome Catholic Parish in Jerome Idaho. St. Jerome is the church many of our producers attend and it is also the church home to a large majority of the Hispanic labor force, if anyone sees and understands the stress the dairy industry is under it will be our houses of worship.

Prior to opening with prayer Father Ron took the time to bring to light what he called the “Three P’s” which are; Presence, Perspective and Prayer. Under presence he illustrated that it is more than appropriate for us as individuals to come together to share each others burdens, as he put it “dump our buckets” of concerns (DOB). That takes time to listen and understand with a compassionate mind set. Perspective, what we perceive as important versus what is important as Father Ron stated “keep in mind – your families need you, neighbors need you, your churches and communities need you, don’t lose that perspective.” Ending the talk with prayer, pointing out that it was Holy Week a time to recognize and reflect on placing your trust not in yourself but in God. These are strong words to reflect on, not only when times are challenging, as they are now, but also when times are good and our lives are filled with abundance.

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### **Magic Valley Meeting – What Direction Should IDA be Taking?**

On March 31<sup>st</sup> a meeting attended by over 160 individuals representing 87 dairies with just under 260,000 cows to provide input into how dairy producers in Idaho want their organization to address the current ongoing dairy crises.

The economics of the dairy industry is like any other industry if supplies outpace demand the price will go down when supplies are short, price will go up. The question lies in how to control supply, everyone realizes that if producers fail to make a correction in the supply demand equation the market place eventually will. In 1980 there were approximately 225,000 commercial dairy operations in the United States 30 years later we are down to less than 57,000 the market place has made the necessary adjustments to keep supply and demand in balance even with all of the current government programs

The meeting focused on supply management through mandatory participation which involves the government participation or voluntary programs which will always have “free riders” taking advantage of the efforts similar to the current problems with CWT.

Adrian Boer, a producer from Jerome Idaho who serves on the Board of Directors of Northwest Dairy Association and also National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) presented information from a national perspective. There are multiple programs that NMPF is currently working on, for more information see the NMPF article by Jim Tillison found on page 3.

Adrian did point out additional benefits of managing supplies such as; stabilizing property values, controlling and managing the heifer population, reducing the fluctuation in cow values and eliminating current government support programs.

The meeting continued with examining voluntary programs that utilize Marketing Agencies in Common (MAC's) that are utilized successfully in other regions of the country. Examples such as Oregon's Milk Marketing Federation and the Southwest Milk Marketing Agency which dairy cooperatives form a MAC to enhance dairy prices and the coordinated efforts increase efficiencies particularly in hauling. Unlike those areas, Idaho has the vast majority of its milk not marketed through cooperatives.

The concept of a MAC could be utilized to form a supply MAC where supplies could be controlled by a producer elected board to determine the volume of the reduced production and the duration that the  
(Continued on page 8)

### District II - Magic Valley Producer Survey

The following results are from the March 31, 2010 producer meeting held in Twin Falls. The meeting was attended by over 160 individuals. Based on the returned surveys there were 87 dairies present representing 259,351 cows, which is approximately 50% of the total mature dairy animals in Idaho. The survey was distributed after the morning discussion on supply management. The survey results are reported as a percent of the cows or if you will milk produced by those operations with the exception of the last question which is reported first on a milk produced basis and then as a individual basis:

1. Based off your first quarter production in 2010 what percent of your milk production would you be willing to reduce?
 

a. 0% reduction	13%
b. 1%-5% reduction	54%
c. 5%-10% reduction	30%
d. Whatever it takes	1%
e. Undecided	2%
  
2. Would you be willing to sign a legally binding document stating that you would reduce production by a certain percentage for a certain period of time?
 

a. Yes	77%
b. No	20%
c. Maybe	3%
  
3. What percent of milk production in Idaho would need to participate for you to be willing to sign a binding contract?
 

a. 75%-85%	15%
b. More than 85%	80%
c. Don't want a program	5%
  
4. Would you support a government mandated supply management program?
 

a. Based on milk cows (milk produced)	
i. Yes	31%
ii. No	67%
iii. Undecided	2%
b. Based on individual operations	
i. Yes	31%
ii. No	63%
iii. Undecided	6%

In the May 2010 Idaho Dairy Focus we will have an article that list the complete survey results from all three IDA Districts.

### The Numbers Behind Idaho Milk Production

- ◆ Total 2009 Idaho Milk Production 12.12 billion pounds which is **1.3%** less than 2009 (IDPC)
- ◆ January Production 1.025 billion pounds **up 2.2%** over January 2009 (NASS)
- ◆ February Production 933 million pounds **up 3.7%** over February 2009 (NASS)
- ◆ Which state needs to export more milk (mainly through finished dairy products) than any other state? Idaho with **7,860** pounds, second is Wisconsin with 4,463 pounds, third is New Mexico with 3,933 pounds and fourth is California with 1,069 (Hoards Dairyman March 10, 2010)
- ◆ Number of Dairies February 2010 in Idaho 579 down 23 from February 2009. (ISDA)
- ◆ Number of lactating and dry cows as of February 2010 **519,794** down 13,186 from February 2010 (ISDA)
- ◆ **33.6%** of Idaho milk production is market through dairy cooperatives.
- ◆ **32.4%** of milk produced in Idaho pays into **CWT** down from a high of over 70% at the conception of the program. The Idaho dairy cooperatives that fully support the CWT funding are Dairy Farmers of America, Northwest Dairy Association (Darigold) and Snake River Dairyman Association.

(Continued from 6—Producer meeting) restrictions would be in place. One item that was obvious is that this is a national issue not just an Idaho issue, can it be done? Sure, the Capper-Volstead Act provides the protection for producers to work together to determine supply levels and other items that impact pricing. The current pricing dilemma should provide all the incentive that is needed for producers to organize a MAC in Idaho. Can Idaho go forward alone, probably not, but there will be little interest in other areas to control supplies voluntarily if Idaho is on the sidelines. There were multiple points of discussion that covered all aspects of voluntary vs. mandatory, capitalism vs. socialism and the concern by producers who also raise other agricultural commodities that production is regulated “to be careful in what we ask for”. With government involvement the end product might not be the product we desired.

Another issue that was examined was the current status of the NMPF Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) program. There was a long discussion of renewing efforts to get the participation in Idaho to its previous levels. The discussion centered on the view that a new voluntary program would take longer to develop than most producers would want. A national program is long term with a difficult path to get a unified industry behind any of the proposals. With little hope of opening the current farm bill to address the issue it would be 2012 – 2013 before any changes approved in the next Farm Bill would be reflected back on the dairy.

Moving forward IDA will work with both the Western States Dairy Producer Trade Association and NMPF to work towards solutions. Below are a few of the membership approved policies that will guide us in those discussions.

The membership of Idaho Dairymen’s Association over the years has developed a policy book with numerous positions that make it clear that less government intervention in agriculture is in the best interest of the dairy industry. At the November 2009 annual meeting the dairy producer passed the following statement regarding milk marketing:

“Idaho Dairymen’s Association, Inc. believes in and encourages its members to participate in milk marketing efforts that serve the best interests of all Idaho dairymen.

Any position taken by Idaho Dairymen’s Association, Inc. or its officers shall not jeopardize or interfere with the ability of any individual dairyman to better himself through separate action unless such action is determined to be detrimental to the Idaho dairy industry.

Even though our policies listed below reflect that we believe it is in the best interest of all agricultural commodities for the government to withdraw price support mechanisms that create price floors, caps supplies or creates artificial demand for agricultural commodities; the Idaho Dairymen’s Association believes that it is in the best interest and essential for the profitability of dairy producers to provide leadership that develops and maintains unity within the national dairy industry. Recognizing, eliminating government programs from agriculture is a long term process the IDA will work with state, regional and national organizations to facilitate unity within the dairy industry while working within the existing and proposed government programs put forward to ensure the long-term financial health and stability of the Idaho dairy industry.”

On Supply management programs the membership also at the November 2009 annual meeting approved the following position: “Idaho Dairymen’s Association, Inc. supports industry controlled and voluntary industry funded supply-demand management programs. The IDA will oppose all government mandated supply – demand programs that have not received support from a super majority vote by individual producers.” In addition a policy was also approved objecting to block voting on government referendums by cooperatives.

Even though we are still in very difficult times the results of the survey found on page ? still indicate that if there was going to be a supply management program it should be voluntary with an overall indication that would be strongly supported as CWT was initially.



[www.downesoneill.com](http://www.downesoneill.com) - [www.dairy.nu](http://www.dairy.nu)

## **Cheap Feed May Be What the Doctor Ordered**

*By Dave Kurzawski*

We have cheese, we have milk, and we have low prices. We have scared bankers, frustrated dairymen and end-users who continue to hear the drumbeat of sluggish sales at the register. Still, for the first time in over a year, I'm excited about the outlook of dairying in this country. You read that right – we finally appear to be on the doorstep of burgeoning dairy farm profitability. And here's the main reason: cheap feed.

Over the past three years, grain farmers have been paid handsomely. And not just here on US soil, but the world over. And handsomely paid grain farmers are not much different than handsomely paid dairy producers – they make more. You may argue that fertilizer was scarce and those input prices were high for a period of time and you would be correct. But that did not prevent them from producing more acres just as the high price of corn did not prevent you from making more milk in 2007 and 2008 (and if we are honest with one another - 2009 as well). But don't take my word for it. Look at the numbers.

Corn stocks in all positions on March 1, 2010 totaled 7.69 billion bushels, up 11 percent from March 1, 2009. Of the total stocks, 4.55 billion bushels are stored on farms, up 11 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 3.15 billion bushels, are up 10 percent from a year ago.

Soybeans stored in all positions on March 1, 2010 totaled 1.27 billion bushels, down 2 percent from March 1, 2009 but higher than what traders expected by 60 million bushels. Soybean stocks stored on farms are estimated at 609 million bushels, down 7 percent from a year ago.

Planted acres estimated for corn this spring are up 2.3 million versus last year while soybeans were estimated 600,000 higher. All in, acres estimated this spring for corn, soybeans, wheat, sorghum and cotton is some 1.260 million fewer than 2009, without taking into consideration expiring CRP acres. But those planting estimations can and often do change depending on the weather, cash prices and the farmer's appetite for risk.

With the outlook for grain farmers bleak here in 2010, the outlook for dairy brightens up for a period of time. Many of you will tell me that the bearish nature of grain prices is also bearish for the price of milk. Cheaper feed equals cheaper milk. Ordinarily I would agree with this premise, except that it was this flawed logic that allowed dairymen to buy high-priced feed without selling milk to bring profit home in 2008. Expensive feed equals expensive milk. Not so much.

So we expect poor Q1 dairy product demand to give way to growing domestic and international buy interest by the end of Q2. And we expect that the current 55 to 65 cent per pound packer price will put a lid on cow numbers this year regardless of heifer inventories. These are supportive features to a market we expect to average closer to \$14.50 to \$15.00/cwt this year. But the real dairy farm profitability we expect to come on the heels of a sub-\$3.00 corn price.

Beyond our expectations, we advise you to slide a floor under the price of milk on rallies. Or, should you be inclined to sell milk through your handler or through futures, make certain that you are locking in a profit by simultaneously setting or protecting a price for your feed.



**IDAHO DAIRYMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

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**Upcoming Meetings**

- April 7-8 Western States Dairy Producers Trade Association  
Salt Lake City, UT
- April 9 Treasure Valley Meeting With Congressman Walt Minnick  
Caldwell Dairigold Plant
- April 20 District I Producer Meeting
- April 22 District II Producer Meeting
- May 19-20 UDI Board Meeting  
Twin Falls, ID

The *Idaho Dairy Focus* is Brought to You by the ***Idaho Dairymen's Association***

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