

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF

ALEXANDRA DEIMLER, CPA

Appearing on Behalf of the Area 6 Milk Dealers

Rebuttal Testimony before Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board

Cost Replacement Hearing Based on 2021 Annual Reports

April 19, 2023

Rebuttal Testimony of Alexandra Albright

Area 6 – Cost Replacement Hearing

I am Alexandra Deimler, Consultant at Herbein + Company, Inc. and my address is 2763 Century Blvd., Reading, PA 19610. I wish to present Rebuttal Testimony on behalf of the Area 6 Milk Dealers. I attach my Curriculum Vitae, as Rebuttal Exhibit D1, which outlines my education, and experience in the dairy industry.

Study Conducted

On behalf of the Area 6 Milk Dealers, I have reviewed the audit files and proposed adjustments prepared by the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board audit staff. I have reviewed the financial information of each of the dealers in the cross-section and have prepared exhibits which present my findings.

Cost Replacement Process

This hearing will accomplish the annual cost replacement process in which the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board substitutes new cost information for the prior information, which is then utilized in developing its wholesale and resale prices. This hearing will include a container cost update utilizing April 2022 cost information as the new starting point for container updating. Once the cost replacement data is adopted, the April 2022 container costs will be updated monthly based upon cost information submitted by the cross-section dealers and reviewed by Board staff. This hearing will also include ingredient cost updating utilizing April 2022 cost information. Ingredient costs will then be updated on a quarterly basis for flavored milk, flavored reduced fat milk and flavored non-fat milk. These updates occur on January 1st, April 1st, July 1st, and October 1st of each year. All exhibits are prepared utilizing a weighted average based on each dealer's percentage of controlled sales in the area

relative to its total sales of such products. This weighting and averaging method has been consistently applied from year to year.

Cross-Section

The Area 6 cross-section of dealers utilized includes DFA Dairy Brands Fluid, LLC - Sharpsville, DFA Dairy Brands Fluid, LLC – Schuylkill Haven, Galliker Dairy Company, Ritchey’s Dairy, Inc., Turner Dairy Farms, and Valley Farms Dairy LLC. The cross-section changed from the previous year based on the board staff’s recommendation. The cross-section companies process, package and deliver most of the controlled milk products in Area 6. This group of companies includes organizations that deliver to supermarkets, convenience stores, schools, institutions, and small retail outlets. In my opinion this cross-section of six dealers is representative of the dealers selling controlled milk products in Area 6.

Rebuttal Exhibits

Rebuttal Exhibit D2 reflects the processing, packaging, and delivery cost per point for calendar year 2021. Please note that the points presented are for sales in the PMMB Area 6 made by the cross-section dealers. These costs should replace the existing costs from 2020, which are currently being utilized by the Board in establishing prices. These costs are calculated in accordance with PMMB rules and regulations and have been consistently applied from the previous year. Our calculation of the processing, packaging, and delivery costs is \$0.3571 per point. Exhibit D2 also shows the number of points (quart equivalents) that are associated with each cost center. For example, the bottling department points for 2021 are 81,995,243 for the cross-section. This is a decrease of 1,323,000 bottling points from 2020, which is about 1.6 percent

Rebuttal Exhibit D2-A is prepared to reflect the effect of the cost replacement process by comparing the 2020 processing, packaging, and delivery costs in the current order with the 2021 processing, packaging, and delivery costs. Additionally, this exhibit reflects the 2022 cost increase

adjustment from Exhibit D7 and removes the 2021 cost increase adjustment. Including the cost update adjustments, the increase in the cross-section dealer costs from the prior cost replacement hearing is \$.0527 per quart equivalent (point), or about 21 cents per gallon increase.

Rebuttal Exhibit D3 and D3-A have been updated to container costs utilized in the February 2023 minimum resale price calculation. The container shrinkage factor reflected on this exhibit is a statewide average and will be utilized for all areas. There are no controlled milk products sold in Area 6 in paper half gallons, 12-ounce containers, 10-ounce containers or half pint plastic containers. The container sizes indicated with footnote (5) on Rebuttal Exhibit D3 should continue to be updated monthly when minimum prices are announced using April 2022 as the new starting point.

Rebuttal Exhibit D4 is prepared to present the ingredient costs per pound of finished product as of April 2022 for inclusion in the product formulas used in the monthly price announcements. Rebuttal Exhibit D4-A reflects the ingredient costs presented on Rebuttal D4 and shows the increase or decrease from the ingredient costs used in calculating the February 2023 minimum prices.

The ingredient costs are shown on D4 in cents per pound of finished product. The PMMB minimum price calculations multiply these ingredient costs per pound times the milk weight of each container size. For example, a quart of flavored milk weighs 2.0 pounds. The PMMB price formulas would calculate the ingredient costs of a quart of flavored milk by multiplying the quart weight of 2.0 pounds times the ingredient cost of \$0.0417 per pound, which is \$0.0834 per quart.

Rebuttal Exhibit D5 updates the cost of milk shrinkage and the costs and revenues from bulk cream and bulk milk transactions.

The current order establishes a net cost of \$0.0043 per pound and the new net cost, based on 2021 transactions is \$0.0074 per pound. There has been a net change of \$0.0031 per pound. That

means overall these three groups of transactions resulted in a cost increase of about 2 1/2 cent per gallon.

Rebuttal Exhibit D6 reflects a comparison of the current order butterfat tests by product type and compares those tests with the 2021 actual butterfat tests. This exhibit also reflects the increase or decrease in butterfat content. Because the butterfat component of milk has a higher cost than the skim component, a decrease in butterfat content will result in a decrease in the cost of milk in the wholesale and resale prices. An increase in butterfat content will increase the cost of milk in finished products. I recommend that the Board replace the current butterfat by product with the 2021 tests reflected on this exhibit.

Rebuttal Exhibit D7 is prepared to calculate the cost increases and decreases incurred during the six (6) month period ending June 30, 2022 with the six (6) month period ending June 30, 2021 for three important cost categories in a dairy plant. These three costs are: labor and fringe benefits, utilities, and insurance. This adjustment allows for an updating of significant costs, which can change materially from year to year. The weighted points for the first six (6) months of 2022 are 43,567,919 which is 5.9 % more than the weighted points for the first six (6) months of 2021. The weighted costs for the first six months of 2022 are \$12,778,178 which is an 18.6 % increase over the weighted costs for the first six months of 2021. The increase in cost is driving a cost increase of .0314 per point for the first 6 months of 2022 versus the first six months of 2021.

Rebuttal Exhibit D8 has been updated to reflect the December 2022 diesel fuel costs, which were used in calculating the minimum prices for February 2023. Additionally, this exhibit reflects the calculation of the average diesel fuel cost for calendar year 2021, which becomes the new starting point for the monthly adjustments. I recommend that this adjustment be continued monthly. The

average diesel fuel cost for 2021 for the cross-section dealers is \$0.0241 per point. This amount varies in each area based on distances traveled, delivery sizes, and fleet fuel efficiency.

Rebuttal Exhibit D9 has been updated to reflect October 2022 natural gas costs. Additionally, this exhibit reflects the calculation of the average heating fuel cost for calendar year 2021, which becomes the new starting point for the monthly adjustments. I recommend that this adjustment be continued monthly.

Container Efficiency Adjustment

An important part of the calculation of PMMB's minimum resale prices is the container efficiency adjustment. These adjustments are in place to allocate the fluid milk processors' costs appropriately to the various sizes of containers sold. The impact of the container efficiency adjustment is to deduct costs from the two larger packages, gallons and half gallons, and to add costs to the smaller containers. Our calculation of updated container efficiency adjustments is shown at Exhibit D10.

Exhibit D10 shows the results of our container efficiency update calculations. The actual quantity of each size container is shown in the first column. These quantities are multiplied by our calculated container efficiency adjustments to determine the impact on cross-section dealer revenue. For example, the updated adjustments would allocate \$869,451 of costs out of the gallon package (a deduction of \$0.1259 each) and add \$659,087 of costs to the half pint (an addition of \$0.0239 each). The net effect of the plusses and minuses is revenue to the dealers of \$ 642. This isn't zero because of rounding. I recommend that the container efficiency adjustments be updated in this cost replacement hearing.

Summary

Rebuttal Exhibit D11-A and D11-B are prepared to reflect the wholesale minimum price for a gallon of reduced fat milk and a half pint of flavored non-fat milk for February 2023. The buildup of the announced February 2023 wholesale price is compared to the February 2023 wholesale price if the proposed cost replacement is implemented. These exhibits also cross-reference the exhibits that support the individual line items.

Class II Controlled Products

We recommend the current process for updating monthly Class II pricing should be continued.

Rate of Return

I recommend that the Board maintain the rate of return for the Area 6 dealers at 3.4%. The rate of return serves as an important factor in the ability of Pennsylvania's fluid milk processors to maintain and invest in their operations. Maintaining the current rate of return is also important for consistency and stability during an uncertain and difficult time for the dairy industry.

Summary and Recommendation

The Area 6 Milk Dealers recommend that the Milk Marketing Board make the cost replacement adjustments, which are reflected in my testimony and exhibits. Thank you for your consideration of my analysis and opinions.