UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 18, 1940.

MILK PRODUCTION ON FARMS

Milk production in February 1940 averaged about the same per day as in 1939, but due to leap year, total production was about 3 percent higher, being estimated at 7.79 billion pounds compared with 7.53 billion last year. At the beginning of the month production per cow was reduced by cold weather, but by March 1 the production per cow reported by Crop Correspondents was the highest on record for the date and two percent higher than a year earlier.

Milk production in March is expected to exceed production in March last year, by somewhere around 2 to 3 percent, barring abnormal weather conditions. As compared with a year ago, the number of milk cows on farms appears to be about 1 percent higher and increasing at a rate slightly exceeding the rate of population increase. The percentage of the milk cows in production on March 1 was about the same as a year ago. The quantity of grain being fed probably averages about the same as a year ago and substantially above average in nearly all States.

Regionally it now seems probable that March milk production will be moderately higher than a year ago in northern States from Indiana eastward and more substantially higher from Illinois and Wisconsin to the Dakotas. In the Gulf States the severe winter reduced the feed available in pastures and has tended to reduce production. Pastures are likely to be late in nearly the whole South.

In Nebraska and nearby territories where drought conditions prevailed last fall, less than the usual supply of green feed is being obtained from pastures and wheat fields and farmers are not feeding grain quite so liberally as a year ago. Considerable areas in Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado also lack adequate subsoil moisture and face uncertain crop prospects so that any material increase in milk production in those States would seem to depend upon an improvement in pastures and feed supplies. In the Western group of States, conditions vary greatly but there now appears to be no general tendency towards marked increases in dairy herds. Production per cow in this area has been substantially above the 10-year average since the middle of 1937 but on March 1 it was reported about the same as at that time last year.

Milk production per capita in 1940 will probably average about as high as in any recent year. Estimates of production on farms, plus rough allowance for production by the cows kept in small towns, indicate a production of about 849 pounds of milk per capita in the United States in 1939. Estimates for earlier years indicate that since 1925 production per capita has ranged only from a low of 817 pounds in 1935 to a high of 855 pounds in 1933. Production in 1940 is expected to be near the upper end of this range if present conditions continue. Feed grain supplies on farms are not quite so large in comparison with livestock numbers as they were a year ago and the prices of feed grains are higher. On the other hand, prices of dairy products are now much higher than a year ago in comparison with prices of hogs, cattle, lambs, and poultry so the milk cows will probably continue to be well fed. The number of milk cows on farms, which increased about 1 percent during 1939 will probably increase somewhat more rapidly during 1940, perhaps nearly two percent, for the number of heifers to be added to the milking herds is larger than in 1939 and marketings of cows have recently been low. The moderate supply of dairy products in storage and the somewhat increased sales of fluid milk and cream are also helping to hold milk production above what it was last year.

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Estimates of Monthly Milk Production on Farms, issued by the Agricultural Marketing Service for the first time in this report will be released about the middle of each month. The estimates have been prepared in response to requests from many people interested in the dairy industry who wish to keep in close touch with the current and prospective trends of total milk production.

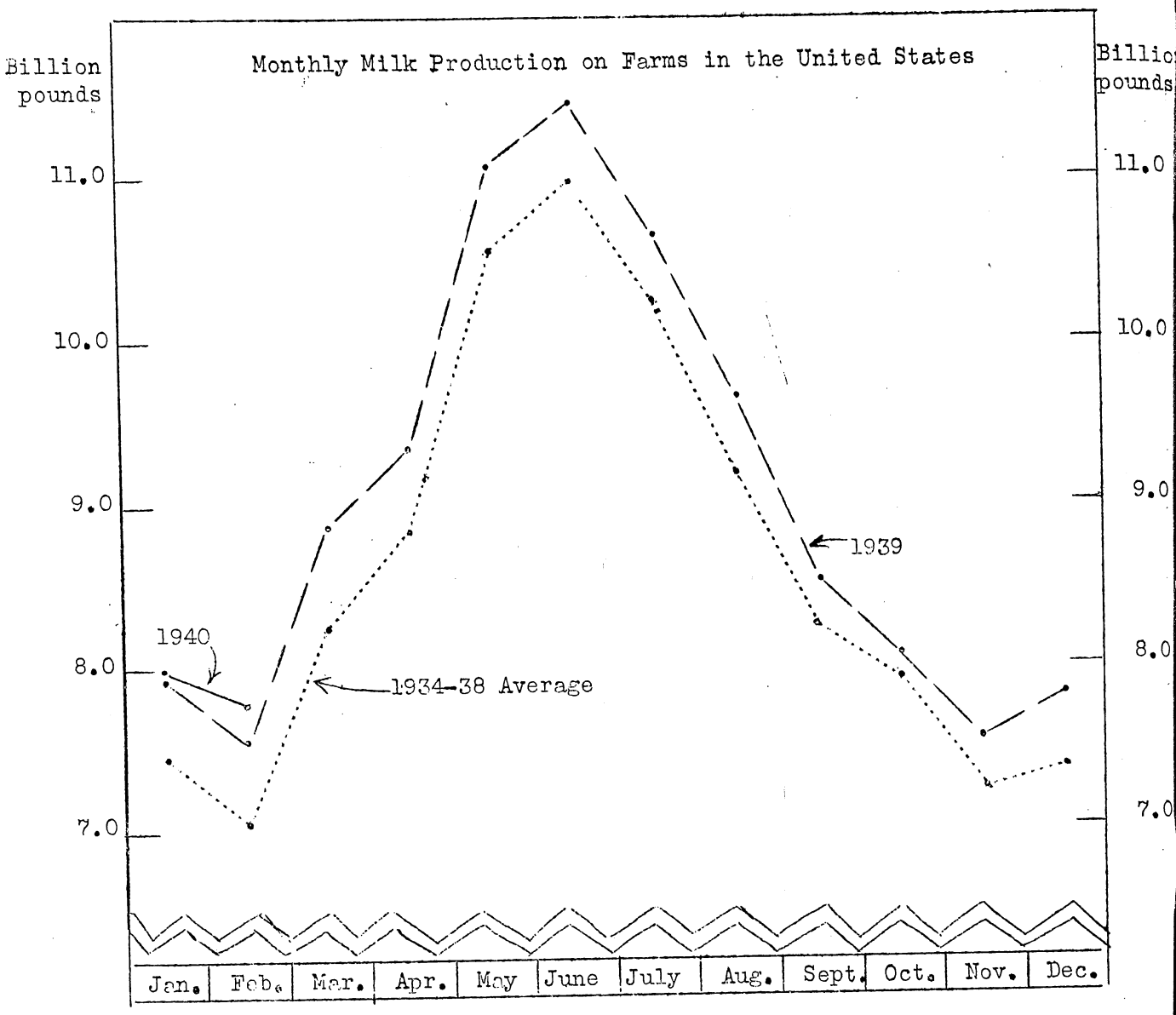
These estimates are based mainly on the current trend in the number of milk cows on farms and on the production per cow reported on the 1st of each month by some 20,000 crop correspondents and certain dairy correspondents. The estimates include adjustments to a lower yearly production per cow and to a slightly wider seasonal range than is reported by crop correspondents, and to allow for a June peak that is above the average for June 1 and July 1. The monthly estimates for past years, as thus computed, appear comparable with available indications of the quantities of milk utilized each month for manufactured dairy products, for fluid consumption in cities, and for use on farms where produced.

In this report the production figures have been presented on the basis of total pounds of milk produced during the calendar month. In interpreting these monthly figures as indicative of the trend of current milk production, allowance should be made for the number of days in the month, variations of which cause unusual seasonal trends in certain months, especially February. In subsequent reports a more complete analysis of the monthly material will be made.

MILK PRODUCED PER MILK COW IN HERDS KEPT BY REPORTERS 1/

State	March 1 (Avg.) 1929-38	March 1 1938	March 1 1939	March 1 1940
	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
Maine	12.6	12.0	12.4	13.2
New Hampshire	14.6	13.9	13.9	14.9
Vermont	13.4	14.0	13.3	14.1
Massachusetts	17.4	16.8	17.8	17.3
Connecticut	17.1	17.3	16.1	17.2
New York	15.3	15.5	16.5	17.0
New Jersey	19.0	19.0	18.5	19.3
Pennsylvania	16.2	16.0	17.0	16.9
North Atlantic	15.73	15.83	16.52	16.75
Ohio	14.3	14.0	14.6	14.7
Indiana	13.0	13.0	13.5	13.8
Illinois	13.9	14.6	14.4	15.1
Michigan	16.3	16.2	17.0	17.0
Wisconsin	16.0	16.0	16.1	16.8
East North Central	14.96	15.07	15.34	15.76
Minnesota	16.8	17.8	17.8	18.7
Iowa	13.8	14.4	15.3	16.0
Missouri	8.5	8.5	9.0	9.2
North Dakota	11.8	11.1	12.1	14.2
South Dakota	11.0	10.3	11.8	12.7
Nebraska	12.9	12.1	14.3	13.8
Kansas	13.2	13.0	14.4	13.4
West North Central	12.99	13.02	13.93	14.65
Maryland	13.3	13.6	14.5	15.6
Virginia	9.5	10.1	10.3	10.0
West Virginia	8.7	8.5	8.6	8.2
North Carolina	9.9	10.6	10.7	10.7
South Carolina	9.2	10.2	8.9	9.6
South Atlantic	9.65	10.18	10.33	10.38
Kentucky	9.3	9.9	9.9	9.6
Tennessee	8.3	8.6	9.2	8.6
Mississippi	6.6	7.1	6.3	5.4
Arkansas	7.1	7.9	7.7	7.0
Oklahoma	9.8	10.0	10.5	9.5
Texas	8.7	9.1	8.1	7.8
South Central	8.28	8.73	8.62	8.08
Montana	11.7	11.0	12.6	12.2
Idaho	15.8	16.2	15.8	16.4
Wyoming	11.4	11.3	11.8	12.6
Colorado	12.8	13.4	14.3	13.7
Washington	15.4	15.2	16.2	16.2
Oregon	14.0	13.7	14.2	14.7
California	17.5	19.9	18.3	17.3
West	14.12	14.58	15.20	15.19
UNITED STATES	12.77	12.98	13.40	13.62

1/ Averages represent the reported daily milk production of herds kept by reporters divided by the total number of milk cows (in milk or dry) in these herds. Figures for New England States are based on combined returns from Crop and Special Dairy reporters and are weighted by counties. Figures for other States, regions, and U. S. are based on returns from Crop reporters only. The regional averages are based in part on records of less important dairy States not shown separately, as follows: North Atlantic, Rhode Island: South Atlantic, Delaware, Georgia, and Florida; South Central, Alabama, Louisiana; Western, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Nevada.



Million pounds

Av.1934-38	7422	7044	8221	8809	10537	10996	10266	9194	8262	7942	7227	7383
1939	7935	7534	8869	9347	11084	11464	10671	9672	8533	8077	7556	7816
1940	7961	7791										

The February production of milk in the United States, estimated at 7.8 billi pounds, showed an increase of about 3 percent over that in the same month a year ag reflecting about the same average daily production and an extra day in the month. The number of cows on farms was about 1 percent larger than a year ago, but production per cow per day averaged about 1 percent lower as the result of cold stormy weather in the early part of the month. With production per cow up sharply on March 1, it appears that total production of milk in March this year will exceed that in March last year by some 2 or 3 percent.

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