USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# DAIRY MARKET NEWS

**MMN Slug ID 2998**

**WEEK OF APRIL 13 – 17, 2026**
**VOLUME 93, REPORT 16**

## DAIRY MARKET NEWS AT A GLANCE

**CME GROUP CASH MARKETS (4/17)**

**BUTTER:** Grade AA closed at $1.6900. The weekly average for Grade AA is $1.7505 (+0.0080).

**CHEESE:** Barrels closed at $1.5750 and 40# blocks at $1.5775. The weekly average for barrels is $1.5750 (-0.0090) and blocks $1.5765 (-0.0315).

**NONFAT DRY MILK:** Grade A closed at $2.2000. The weekly average for Grade A is $2.1640 (+0.1345).

**DRY WHEY:** Extra grade dry whey closed at $0.6900. The weekly average for dry whey is $0.7000 (+0.0030).

**BUTTER HIGHLIGHTS:** Domestic butter demand is mixed. Some stakeholders in the West region report strong demand, while some in the Central and East regions report lighter demand. Export demand is strong and butter produced in the US remains competitively priced. Cream spot loads are available for butter manufacturers. Demand from butter makers for spot cream is not heavy. Cream intakes at butter facilities are meeting expectations. Butter production is generally active seven days a week and sufficiently keeping up with demand. Bulk butter overages range from 2 cents below to 7 cents above market across all regions.

**CHEESE HIGHLIGHTS:** Northeast cheese production is mixed as some plants face downtime while others run busy schedules supported by ample milk. Retail demand is softer, but bulk interest and strong export orders to Southeast Asia and the Middle East keep inventories balanced. Central milk output remains strong, with plentiful spot volumes and Class III spot prices ranging from $8-under to $2-under Class. Cheesemakers note some maintenance downtime, but production stays strong as demand and firmer export interest keep spot loads available. Western milk supplies keep cheese output steady, though spot milk is tightening. Domestic demand is quieter due to a conference, but international interest is stronger. Overall market sentiment is neutral.

**FLUID MILK HIGHLIGHTS:** Nationwide, milk production is seasonally strong and volumes are up. The Northeast and Upper Midwest are in the beginning stages of spring flush while states with warmer climates are nearing the end of the flush. Class I demand is steady to strong. Most educational institutions have resumed classes after spring break, keeping demand up. Class II demand is steady to strong. Ice cream production is on the rise, and manufacturers are taking in spot loads of cream to maintain full schedules. Class III production is steady. Downtime left spot loads of milk available on the market in several areas. Class III milk prices range from $8-under to $2-under Class this week. Class IV demand is strong. Butter churns are operating at or near full capacity and some facilities are taking spot loads of cream. Condensed skim is more available this week due to downtime in some facilities. Cream multiples for all Classes range:1.10 – 1.35 in the East; 1.10 – 1.30 in the Midwest; 1.06 – 1.28 in the West.

**DRY PRODUCTS HIGHLIGHTS:** Nonfat dry milk prices posted strong gains across all regions this week, led by notable increases at the top of the mostly range for low/medium heat in the Central and East regions. Big gains were also seen at the top of each price range for all heat categories across all regions. Dry buttermilk prices also moved higher nationwide, with the most significant jump occurring at the top of the West region price range. Dry whey markets were mixed, showing steady to modest shifts. Central region prices held firm at the top of both the range and mostly series, while the bottom of the range edged lower and the lower end of the mostly series increased. The West region declined throughout the series except for a steady bottom of the mostly range. Prices in the East remained unchanged. Lactose markets were largely steady aside from a noticeable dip at the lower end of the price range. Whey protein concentrate 34% saw a sharp increase at the top of the price range while the rest of the series held steady. Dry whole milk prices firmed at both ends of the range, supported in part by strengthening nonfat dry milk markets. Acid and rennet casein prices remained unchanged.

**ORGANIC DAIRY MARKET NEWS:** The Spring 2026 meeting of the National Organic Standard Board (NOSB) is scheduled for May 12-14 in Omaha, NE. The written comment period is open through May 4, and online webinars regarding public comments will be hosted on May 5 and 7. AMS reported the February 2026 U.S. sale of total organic milk products was up the previous year. From the start of the year through February, the U.S. sale of total organic milk products was down compared to the same period a year prior. Organic retail dairy advertisements increased in week 16. Ads increased for the four most advertised organic commodities: milk, yogurt, ice cream, and cheese.

**FEBRUARY ESTIMAED SALES:** Total Fluid Products Sales 3.4 billion pounds of packaged fluid milk products were shipped by milk handlers in February 2026. This was 0.4 percent lower than a year earlier. Estimated sales of total conventional fluid milk products decreased 0.5 percent from February 2025 and estimated sales of total organic fluid milk products increased 0.4 percent from a year earlier.

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### DAIRY MARKET NEWS PRICE SUMMARY FOR APRIL 13 - 17, 2026
### PRICES ($/LB) & CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS PUBLISHED PRICES

| Commodity | | Range | | Mostly | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NDM** | | | | | |
| Central Low/Med. Heat | | 1.9700 | 2.1800 | 2.0000 | 2.1600 |
| | Change | 0.1000 | 0.1200 | 0.0500 | 0.1400 |
| Central High Heat | | 2.0600 | 2.1900 | | |
| | Change | 0.0600 | 0.1000 | | |
| West Low/Med. Heat | | 1.9200 | 2.1700 | 1.9600 | 2.0500 |
| | Change | 0.0300 | 0.1150 | 0.0300 | 0.0300 |
| West High Heat | | 2.0800 | 2.2100 | | |
| | Change | 0.0700 | 0.1150 | | |
| **DRY WHOLE MILK** | | | | | |
| National | | 2.2900 | 2.6300 | | |
| | Change | 0.1400 | 0.0500 | | |

| Commodity | | Range | | Mostly | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BUTTERMILK** | | | | | |
| Central/East | | 1.5500 | 1.7500 | | |
| | Change | 0.0700 | 0.0200 | | |
| West | | 1.5600 | 1.8000 | 1.6000 | 1.7000 |
| | Change | 0.0200 | 0.0800 | 0.0200 | 0.0200 |
| **WHEY** | | | | | |
| Central | | 0.5800 | 0.7100 | 0.6200 | 0.6900 |
| | Change | -0.0100 | N.C. | 0.0200 | N.C. |
| West | | 0.6600 | 0.7900 | 0.7000 | 0.7400 |
| | Change | -0.0100 | -0.0200 | N.C. | -0.0100 |
| Northeast | | 0.6000 | 0.7000 | | |
| | Change | N.C. | N.C. | | |

| Commodity | | Range | | Mostly | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LACTOSE** | | | | | |
| Central/West | | 0.3500 | 0.6600 | 0.5100 | 0.5900 |
| | Change | -0.1100 | N.C. | N.C. | N.C. |
| **WPC 34%** | | | | | |
| Central/West | | 1.4500 | 2.0500 | 1.5500 | 1.7000 |
| | Change | N.C. | 0.3000 | N.C. | N.C. |
| **CASEIN** | | | | | |
| Rennet | | 3.5000 | 4.0000 | | |
| | Change | N.C. | N.C. | | |
| Acid | | 3.8500 | 4.4000 | | |
| | Change | N.C. | N.C. | | |
| **ANIMAL FEED WHEY** | | | | | |
| Central | | 0.3500 | 0.3700 | | |
| | Change | N.C. | N.C. | | |

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**MARCH CONSUMER PRICE INDEX:** The March CPI for all food is 346.8, up 2.7 percent from 2025. The dairy products index is 268.0, down 1.6 percent from a year ago. The following are March, year to year percentage changes for selected products: fresh whole milk is -2.9; cheese -4.4; and butter, -8.3.

**NATIONAL RETAIL REPORT:** In week 16, conventional dairy ads increased 41 percent, and organic ads are up 40 percent. Conventional butter, milk, and flavored milk appeared in fewer ads. On the organic side, butter, cream cheese, and sour cream appeared in fewer ads. The most advertised conventional commodity is ice cream, and most organic ads this week are for milk.