

Henry Hardy
Farmington

- I support this proposed rule from the Department of Agriculture.
 - There are many people that our farms support – not just the dairy farmers and their families. This might surprise you, but the Maine Dairy Industry represents a \$2.7 billion slice of Maine's economy. Our 180 dairy farmers are the engine that create 14,900 good jobs in our state. Four (4) families directly depend on our farm. Currently my wife and I are sole proprietors of our farm. The Tier program will help us continue the farm for the next generation, by giving us a stable pay price. This is needed as pay price for our product continues at a price we were paid years ago, while all of our inputs continue to rise; ie. insurance, labor costs, feed, equipment, repairs, licenses, supplies, taxes etc.
 - The 2019 cost of production survey represents how our costs have changed since the last update. They are based on real-life information collected from Maine dairy farmers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - The law requires a regular update of the cost of production based on an objective survey by the Maine Milk Commission. The Maine Legislature has not updated these figures since 2007.
 - Make no mistake, this cost of production estimate does not make the farmer whole. The adjusted numbers just help farmers like me market my product and allow me to make smart management decisions for my operation.
 - The dairy tier program has proven itself to be effective to slow the loss of dairy farms in Maine. However, the current cost of production figures are a modified figure based on a 2007 survey. We urge the legislature to adopt the 2019 survey because they consider many of the changes in our farming operations, and they are based on real-life data.
 - The cost of production figure does not account for the rise of inflation. Inputs have risen, but the price we receive for milk has stayed stagnant. This modest price update will help the Maine dairy farmer recoup some of those rising costs.
- The cost of production study can be found on the Maine Milk Commission website, and the file can be accessed [here](#)
- 2020 Cost of Production Study Report (PDF)
- If you'd like more information, please reach out to us, either by phone or email

Sincerely,
Henry Hardy
Owner Hardy Farm 207 491 6789
MDIA Board member
Farmington, ME