

DairyLine Radio – Interview with Lee Mielke

ONE OF THE WAYS TO SOLVE THE GROWING SURPLUS OF NONFAT DRY MILK IS TO INCREASE CONSUMER DEMAND

(February 9, 2004) Nonfat dry milk is a dairy product we have more than we need and current government dairy policy means burgeoning government stockpiles will continue to grow weekly. One of the "solutions" is to increase consumer demand for powder and the producer-funded dairy check off is working on that, according to Joe O'Donnell, Executive Director of the California Dairy Research Foundation.

O'Donnell was our guest on Monday's DMI Update and he reported that most of the surplus powder is what he termed, "regular spec powder," but the goal, as we increase global communication, competition, and product development, is to get increased specifications from buyers for the types of powder that they need in order to "Function in the final food product that comes into the retail market." He stressed that powder manufacturers need the technology that allows them to compete in the evolving markets.

Flavor is one example, according to O'Donnell. "If milk powder is used in a particular bakery mix or confectionary mix or whatever it might be, there are 'flavor notes' associated with how the powder is produced."

Research overseen by Mary Ann Drake, at North Carolina State University, helps us understand how we can control the types of flavors that are developed in the manufacturing of milk powders for an intended market.

We also looking at the chemistry involved in manufacturing, he said, including the lipid interactions, fat interactions, and the proteins and Dr. Rafael Jimenez Flores, at Cal Poly, is working on that.

Also, the Dairy Products Technology Lab at Cal Poly, run by Dr. Phil Tong, supports all of the efforts of the powder industry on a day-to-day basis, O'Donnell concluded. "If there's a problem, Tong's lab can help resolve it."

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