

Report from Brussels 13/2/08

EU dairy farmers stand united

4,500 dairy farmers from across Europe attended the European Milk Board (EMB) International Dairy Congress in Brussels on 13/2/08 - **Active Market Regulation: Balanced markets = Fair prices** - where a resolution was passed demanding farmgate prices that cover the cost of production and that include a fair payment for the work force (in many cases unpaid/underpaid family labour). EMB also want to see a flexible control of milk quantities to enable supply to be geared to demand in the hands of milk producers. (*see full European Milk Producers' resolution attached*)

During the Congress, 14 model cows – the Faironikas (one cow from each member of the EMB + an European one) were given to the EU Commission representative, Mr. Hoelgaard, and will find their way to the responsible EU authorities as a reminder of the significant role that dairy farmers have in the community by producing milk.

Doris Robertson, representing Dairy Farmers of Scotland at the conference, said,

“I think it will turn out to be an historic day with strong farmer representation from across Europe and all countries willing to stand together.

EMB is only 18 months old and to organise a congress of such high calibre with such a high attendance in Brussels demonstrates their professionalism and ability **and** rapidly growing support. Just to see over 4000 dairy farmers stand united in the one conference hall was a very powerful sight...

...Most importantly EMB gives dairy farmers in the UK the very real chance to unite with our European colleagues to realise common objectives – **Fair trade for milk and Food security for our consumers.**”

She added that one of the great benefits of EMB is that milk producers from across Europe can report on what's happening in their own country at regular member meetings.

By standing together farmers can realise better farmgate prices as can be seen in Germany where the price to farmers has risen from 27 €cents to 43 €cents (32 ppl) compared with the UK where many farmers are still receiving around 25 ppl (34 €cents) and with those on 27.5 ppl still only 37 €cents. There is obviously still room for farmgate price rises which will be welcome news to farmers having to cope with massively increasing costs.

Ends.
