

Dairy Farmers of Scotland meeting 6/5/08

Scottish milk producers selling milk to most of the major Scottish milk buyers and from as far afield as Stranraer to the Borders and Fife to Argyll, met in Hamilton on Tuesday night to discuss how to avert the imminent disaster facing Scottish dairy farming if a cost covering milk price wasn't forthcoming.

Many agreed that there would be little point in feeding concentrates at prices on their way to £300 per tonne signalling an even greater fall in milk production than last year. Any talk of a spring flush has now been blown away by the latest intervention board figures for April production which are the lowest on record.

It was also stressed that if there was *any* drop in milk price there would be an exodus of dairy farmers as never seen before and it was pointed out that *the increases in fuel, fertiliser and feeding were equivalent to a decrease in milk price!*

The decision to leave the industry could be hastened by the high value of dairy cows at present with cast cows making better prices too. Many producers don't want to miss the boat and fear that if the flood gates open those prices may fall as cow sales increase.

Solutions discussed included having a strong milk producer organisation to improve negotiating position; liaison with NFUS on contracts and other issues; and promotion of the Fair Milk (the EMB's fair trade for milk campaign).

In **summary** it was agreed:

- That support from farmers and NFUS must be gauged
- Finances must be found
- That DFOS must be in a position to deliver
- And that if action to secure a milk price that at least covered cost of production didn't happen soon then Scottish dairy farming was heading for disaster.