

## **MILK LABELING GUIDANCE**

To: Dairy Processors

From: Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture Bureau of Food Safety

Subject: Milk Labeling Flexibilities

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is committed to strengthening the state's dairy economy, and processors play an essential role in ensuring fluid milk and value-added products reach consumers. Labeling provides processors an avenue to develop a brand, and the department is providing guidance on whole milk labeling to ensure transparency as processors determine their own market strategies.

The Food and Drug Administration defines whole milk as milk containing a minimum of 3.25% milkfat. For example, milk measured at 3.5% natural milkfat could be labeled as Whole Milk, or 3.5% Fat Whole Milk. Federal law requires accuracy, and those who label milk with a specific fat percent would need to evaluate their milkfat percentage closely for compliance.

Percent Fat Free claims under federal regulation are only permitted when the fat content of a food meets the definition of a low-fat food, which is less than 3 grams of fat per serving. Only 1% Low Fat Milk, or Skim Milk will meet the threshold that would allow a percent Fat Free claim on a label.

Processors must determine what labeling works best for their business and market strategy. The department is not suggesting a change in whole milk labeling, but rather allowing processors to determine which labeling options work best with their business plans.

Any processors interested in making labeling changes should contact the Bureau of Food Safety & Laboratory Services to make sure potential changes are not in conflict with federal labeling regulations. The Bureau of Food Safety & Laboratory Services is actively reviewing the federal labeling regulations to determine options for interested processors related to labeling. The PA Milk Sanitation Law requires all labels to be approved by the department before use.