

EXHIBIT NO. 4

Metropolitan

Release No. 211-04

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USDA DELAYS HEARING ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CENTRAL FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDER

Washington, D.C., Oct. 14, 2004 – The U. S. Department of Agriculture today announced that a public hearing to consider proposals to amend the Central Federal milk marketing order will be delayed to allow industry participants more time to prepare. The hearing was originally scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m. on Oct. 18, 2004, at the Hilton Kansas City Airport, 8801 NW 112th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64153. The hearing will now take place on Dec. 6, 2004, at the same time and location.

The hearing will consider proposals that would modify performance standards for supply plants, adjust diversion limits, modify the "touch base" provision, limit the pooling of milk that was not pooled in prior months and establish transportation and assembly credits. Other proposals under consideration would eliminate all supply plant provisions, establish a "dairy farmer for other markets" provision, eliminate or modify "split plant" provisions, eliminate or modify system pooling for supply plants and modify handler payment dates from the producer settlement fund. Evidence will be taken at the hearing to determine whether marketing conditions exist that warrant omission of a recommended decision for any of the proposals.

The notice of hearing delay will be published as a proposed rule in a future issue of the *Federal Register*. Copies of the notice of hearing delay and the original hearing notice may be obtained from the USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs, STOP 0231 - Rm. 2971, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0231. The notice of hearing delay and the original hearing notice will be available on AMS' web site, at: www.ams.usda.gov/dairy.

More information about the hearing and the notice of delay is also available from the market administrator office, as follows:

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