



"It's about pounds, not *percents*"

By W.K. (Bill) Sanchez, Ph.D., Dipl. ACAN
Technical Service Director – Dairy
Diamond V

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Milk fat and protein concentrations are continuing their downward trend from the seasonal peaks, as shown in this month's DV Monitors. Current milk component data cover leading Holstein and Jersey herds through the end of March. This month we're adding a couple of Jersey graphs to illustrate what is happening with pounds of components.

Astute readers have commented, "It's about pounds not percents." That's astute because producers get paid on pounds of components not percentages. However, it's the combined value of pounds of milk times the percent of components that result in the total pounds of components shipped. Even though percentages have been dropping for about 8 weeks, milk output has been rising, resulting in more pounds of components.

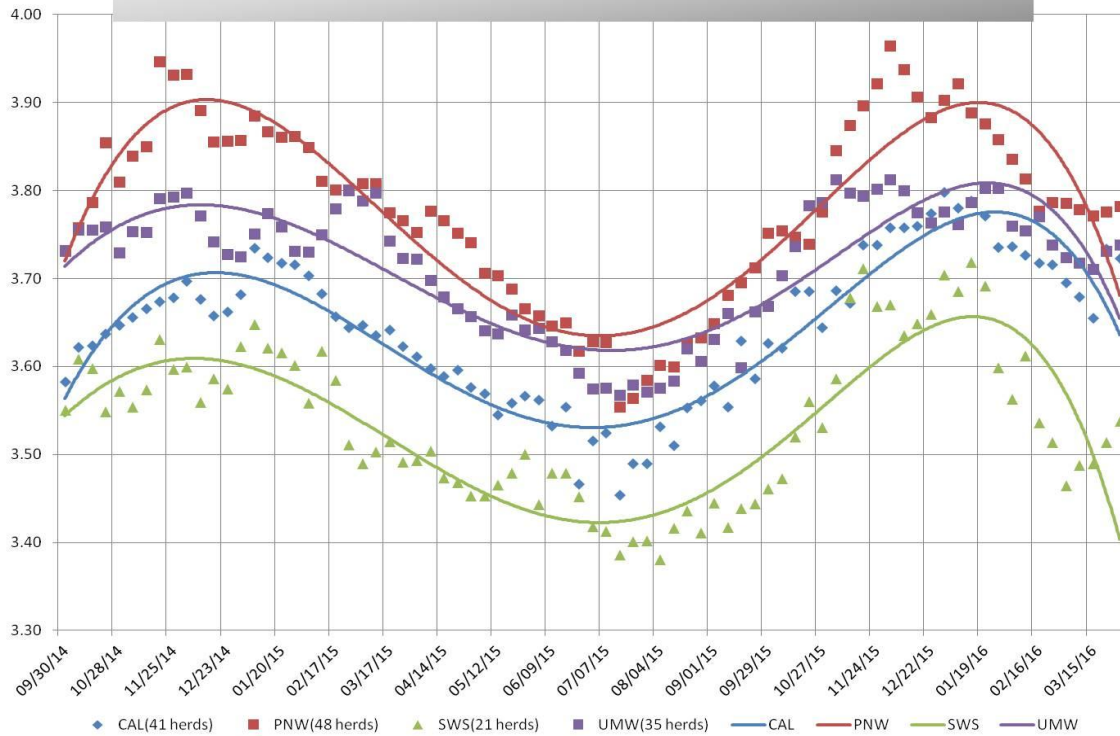
But now it looks like it's that time of year when the combined value – reported as energy-corrected milk or ECM – is starting to plateau.

For example, see the Jersey graphs: Milk fat and protein percentages have been dropping for a couple of months but total milk shipped has been rising. However, notice that the rise in ECM is starting to plateau. This is the time of year to really focus on maximizing the shipments of components, especially milk fat to take advantage of the continued high value of butter relative to non-fat powder prices.

See graphs on the following pages

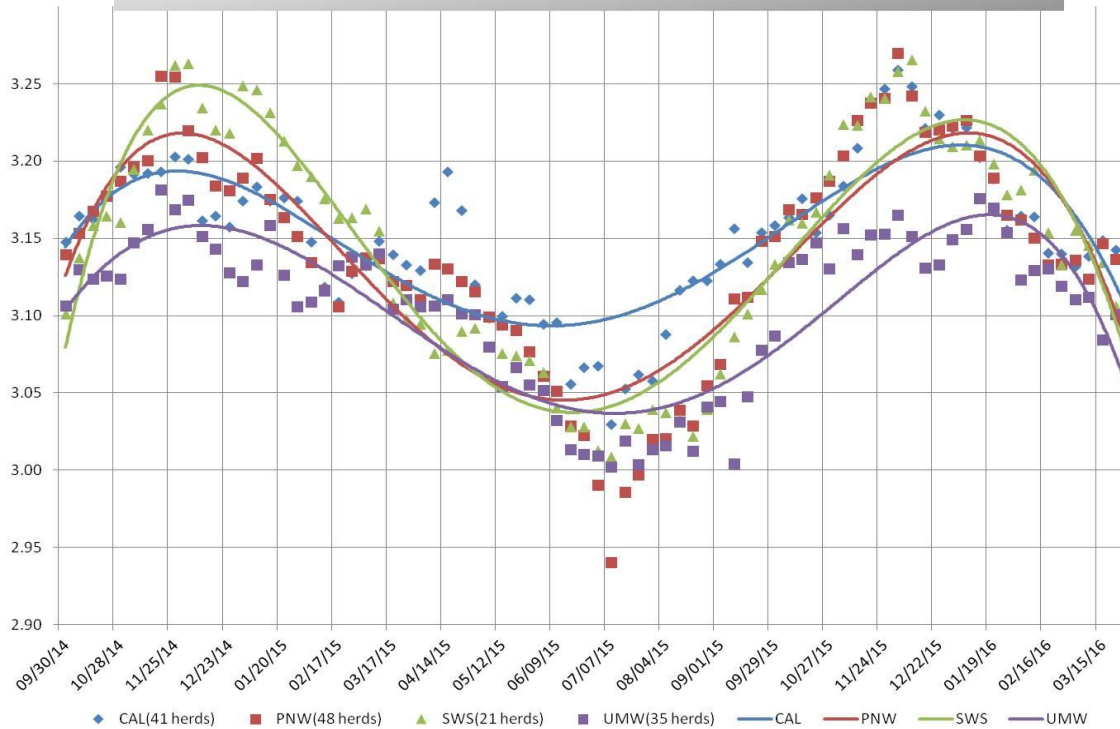
Weekly Holstein Bulk Tank Milk Fat %

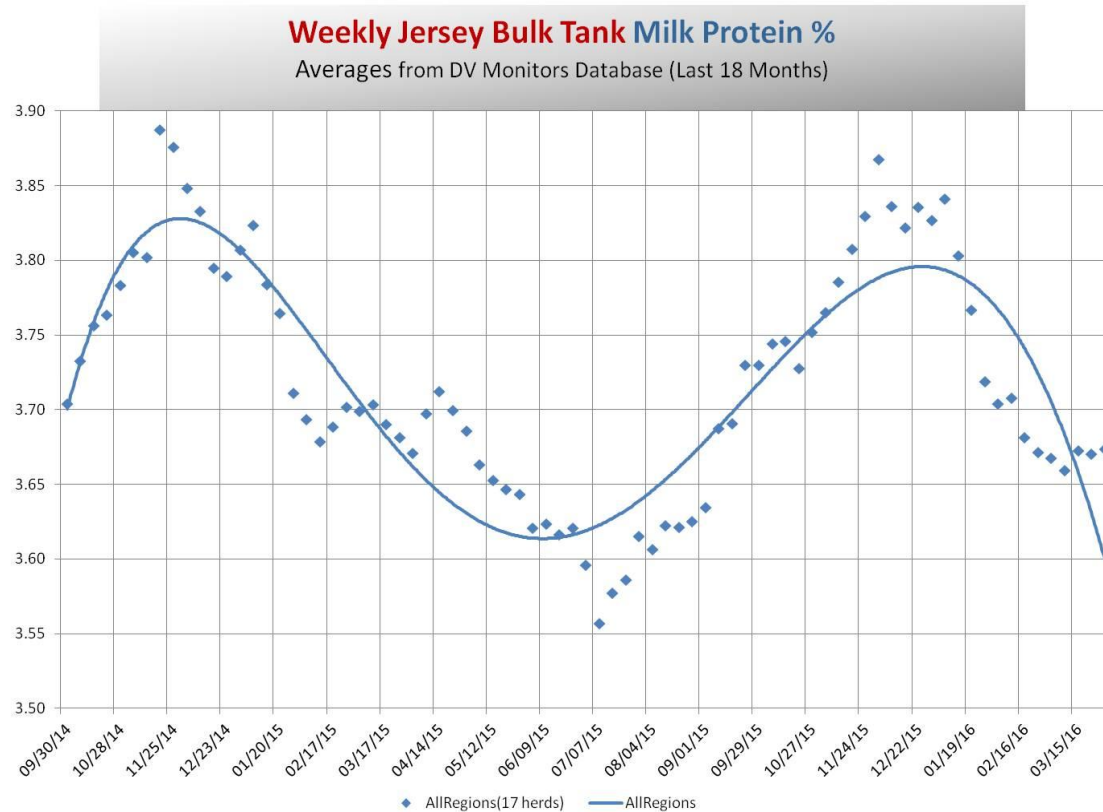
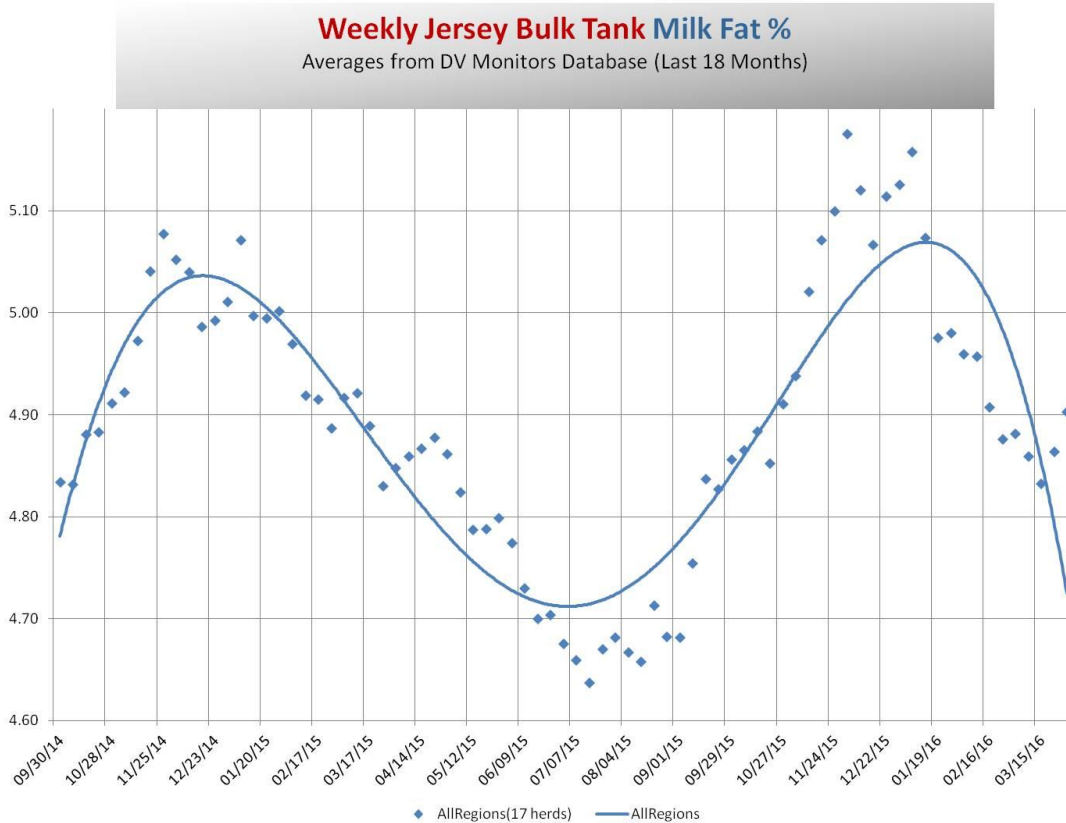
Averages from DV Monitors Database (Last 18 Months)



Weekly Holstein Bulk Tank Milk Protein %

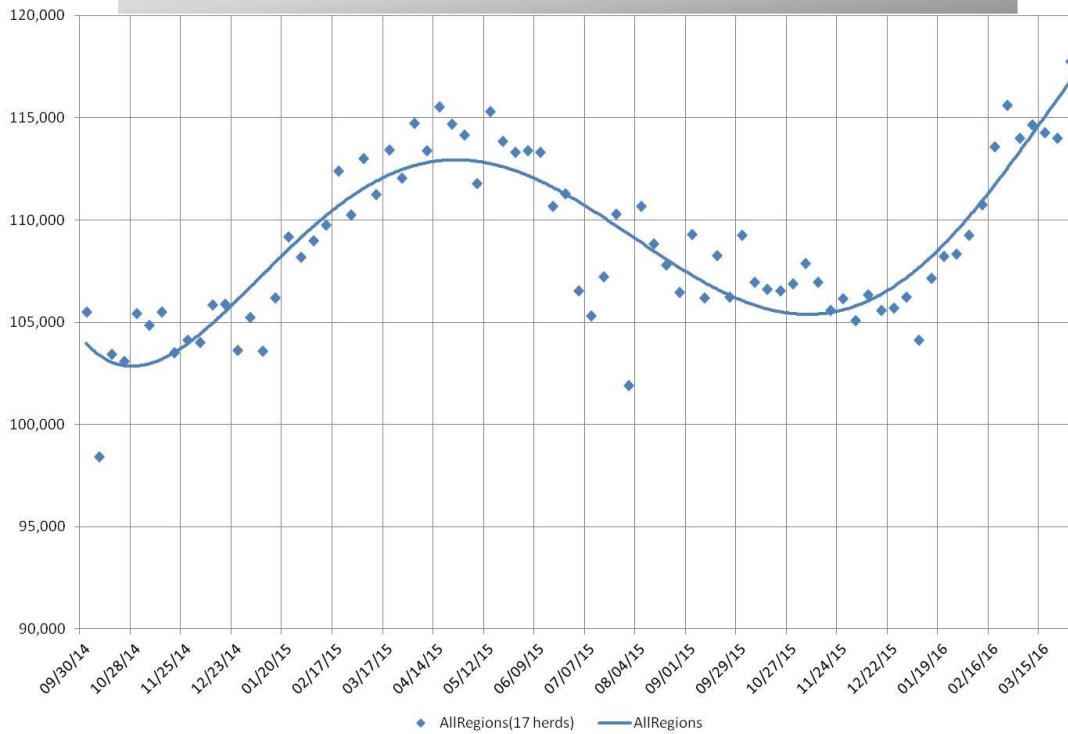
Averages from DV Monitors Database (Last 18 Months)





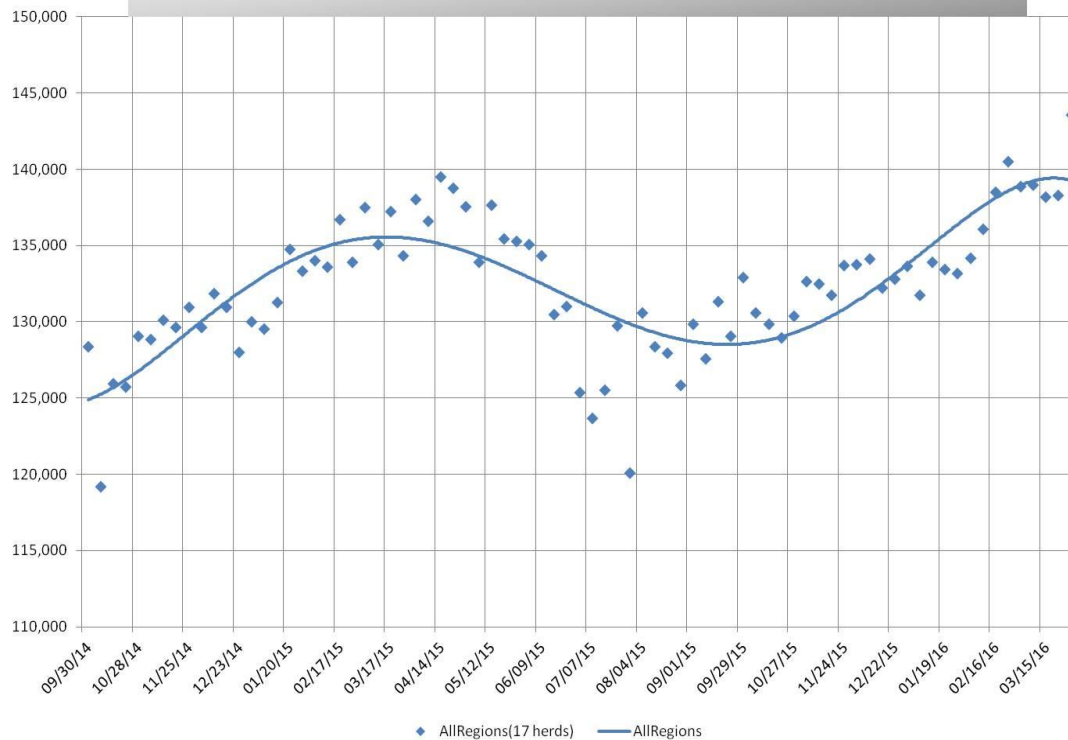
Weekly Jersey Bulk Tank Shipments (lbs/day)

Averages from DV Monitors Database (Last 18 Months)



Weekly Jersey Bulk Tank Energy-Corrected Milk (lbs/day)

Averages from DV Monitors Database (Last 18 Months)



DV Monitors provides real-time regional milk component data based on weekly weighted averages from about 150 Holstein herds and 17 Jersey herds enrolled in our database in the West and Upper Midwest. We download the information from various milk processor websites for every load of milk and generate weekly averages. DV Monitors gives you monthly updates to help you monitor milk components by comparison with leading dairies by region year-round.

It's hard to compare an individual dairy with milk processor averages in some regions that have large numbers of Holstein and Jersey herds pooled together. So, we summarize the data by breed. We also provide separate charts of the Holstein data from four major dairy regions. The database consists of data from the following regions with the number of herds that have been continually part of the database over the last 18 months:

- CA – California (41 herds)
- PNW – Oregon, Washington, Idaho (48 herds)
- SW – Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas (22 herds)
- UMW – South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio (36 herds)

Due to the lower number of Jersey herds enrolled in the database, we compute a national rather than regional average. In any case, the database is large enough to provide an index for all Diamond V customers to compare their milk fat and milk protein performance to that of other leading herds.

By providing weekly summaries for comparable high-performing herds, DV Monitors can help rule out some of the “background noise” of normal variation. The data reveal important seasonal trends as well as the transient effects of other factors affecting the herds enrolled in the program.

Using DV Monitors data, you can “self index” your dairy’s fat and protein performance against others. If your milk component values are much greater than the regional averages, then it’s likely that what you and your nutritionist are doing is working.

We welcome your questions about DV Monitors. Please email questions to the *DairyAdvisor* editor (cgill@diamondv.com) with “DV Monitors” in the subject line. A Diamond V Dairy Advisor will follow up.



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