



The Kincardine INDEPENDENT



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Kincardine, Tiverton, Ripley and Saugeen Shores firefighters spent 19 hours battling a blaze on a farm property near Millarton last Wednesday and were able to contain it to a single building. See story on page 2. (Tammy Schneider photo)

Eliminating supply management would spell the end of the family farm

By Barb McKay

While North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations between Canada and the United States continue, with no end in sight, all Canadian dairy producers like Joanne and Kevin Stewart can do is hold their breath and wait.

The Stewarts have owned their dairy farm on Highway 9 in Kincardine for 33 years, since purchasing it from Kevin's parents in 1985. These days, their sons, Paul and Shawn, have a hand in its operations. The family has a herd of 150 Holsteins – an average size herd, Kevin says – and currently milk 70. According to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' most recent farm count by county in 2017, there are 154 dairy producers in

Bruce County. There are fewer dairy farms operating in the area than there used to be, the Stewarts said, but those operating are producing more, so the quantity of milk leaving the county hasn't really changed.

Unlike in the U.S., where dairy is subsidized by the government, Canada uses a supply management system. The system, which has been in place for roughly 50 years and is regulated by provincial marketing boards, limits production based on consumer demand and ensures that dairy (and poultry) farmers receive a fair return, without the significant market price fluctuations that can impact other agricultural sectors.

Canada's supply management system for dairy has been a focal point of NAFTA negotiations, with

U.S. President Donald Trump accusing Canada of unfairly treating American farmers by keeping dairy products out of Canada by imposing strict tariffs. However, U.S. dairy exports to Canada have grown exponentially since NAFTA was enacted. While it is true that some dairy from the U.S. and other trade partners is subject to tariffs, under the supply management system Canada sets a quota for the dairy it receives from other countries, and exports below that quota are not subject to tariffs. Last year, duty free exports of dairy to Canada amounted to \$500 million.

Kevin Stewart said pressure is coming from the Trump government to eliminate the supply management system because the U.S. is dealing with an oversupply of dairy and relies on

exports.

"I feel for them, but flooding our system isn't the answer," he said. "We'd overflow in two days."

What many consumers do not realize, Stewart said, is that the price farmers receive for milk has nothing to do with the price of the end product in stores.

"The prices to farmers go down, but the prices in the stores stay the same."

While more competition from U.S. dairy producers might drive prices down slightly, it would only be for the short term, Stewart said.

"As dairy farmers, we want a fair price for the consumer, but we want a fair price for us too, and that is what the marketing board is trying to do. (Eliminating supply management) might cause prices to go

down for a little while to prove a point, but they won't stay there. That's been proven again and again."

Geoff Farrell and his family operate a dairy and cash crop farm on Highway 21 in Kincardine. His father ran the dairy operation before the days of supply management.

"When it came in he embraced it, and it's been a good system for 50 years," Farrell said. "Our thoughts are, supply management has always brought stability to the dairy industry. It's like our union. You know what you get at the end of the day, where in other aspects of the agricultural industry you are at the whim of the world market."

Whereas crop farmers can wait, to some extent, for a better market price, dairy products have a shorter shelf life.

Milk has to land at its end market within five days of leaving a farm.

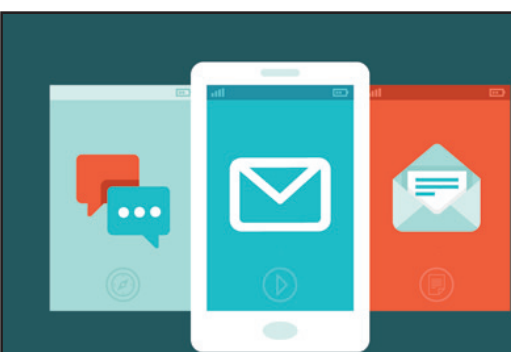
Farrell believes it is large corporately-owned farms in the U.S., not the average American family-run farm, that are demanding that supply management be removed from NAFTA, and said saturating the Canadian market with U.S. dairy would be devastating.

"It would decimate the Canadian dairy industry. It would mean the end of the family farm."

While Farrell is cautiously optimistic that the Canadian government will not give in to the U.S. government's demand on supply management, he anticipates that there could be concessions.

"We might have to give up Class 7," he said.

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Firefighters battle blaze near Millarton for 19 hours

A fire on a farm property near Millarton was kept under control by firefighters from three departments who worked around the clock to contain it.

Municipality of Kincardine Fire Chief Kent Padfield reported that on Sept. 5, just after 3 a.m., Kincardine Fire and Emergency Services received a 911 call

for a structure fire on Sideroad 10 in Kincardine. Firefighters from Kincardine and Tiverton Fire stations responded and additional support was provided by Ripley-Huron Fire Department and Sauguen Shores Fire Department. Bruce County paramedics, Hydro-One and OPP were also on scene.

Padfield said a utility building containing farm equipment and baled straw was fully engulfed when firefighters arrived. The initial actions of the fire department ensured nearby buildings were protected from the heat of the fire.

The firefighters were at the location for 19 hours and four water

tankers shuttled water to the fire. Heavy equipment was brought to the scene to remove the straw bales, and the aerial truck was used together with hose lines to extinguish the fire.

"Firefighters did a great job of extinguishing this fire and working in very hot conditions," Padfield said. "We were challenged by the large

amount of baled straw burning and the hot September day. Two backhoes were brought in to remove the straw so it could be extinguished. Because of the prolonged operations and the heat, additional firefighters were requested from the Ripley-Huron Fire Department."

Padfield said the building did not con-

tain any animals and there were no injuries reported.

The damage as a result of the fire is estimated at more than \$500,000. Because of the dollar loss, the fire is being investigated by the Office of the Fire Marshal Investigative Services.

Kincardine dairy farmers weigh in on North American Free Trade talks

(continued from page 1)

Class 7 is a new milk class created by the Canadian government to deal with large U.S. exports of ultrafiltered milk into the country. Ultrafiltered or diafiltered milk is heavily filtered milk with a high protein concentration and is often used to make cheese and yogurt. With an overpro-

duction of milk, U.S. dairy producers have been selling the new product to Canadian processors, and because ultrafiltered milk was introduced into the market after the advent of NAFTA it is not subject to tariffs. Class 7 allows Canadian processors to obtain domestic dairy products at a lower price, effectively putting an end to the U.S.

export of ultrafiltered milk to Canada and raising the ire of Trump.

The Stewarts are watching as NAFTA negotiations continue but Kevin said he isn't consumed by it.

"It's one variable in all the variables we deal with each day - weather, seasonal stuff, the odd cow that gets sick. There is always something coming at

you. I've given up losing sleep over NAFTA deals a long time ago."

Joanne said the government's handling of the negotiations thus far leaves her feeling optimistic.

"We have a positive attitude this far. I'm impressed with how they have been sticking with it."

Huron-Kinloss residents face drug charges

Two Huron-Kinloss residents face a multitude of charges after a police takedown near Teeswater last week.

According to an OPP report, on Sept. 4 at approximately 6 a.m., members of the South Bruce and Huron OPP were conducting an investigation on Concession Road 4 near Teeswater. Police spotted a stolen vehicle and attempted to stop it but

the driver would not stop. OPP Aviation Services were called in and the Eurocopter EC135 chopper kept sight of the vehicle.

Police arrested a man and a woman after they abandoned the stolen vehicle and attempted to flee on foot, west of Harriston.

A 24-year-old man was held for bail and charged with two counts of flight from police, two

counts of possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000, two counts of driving while disqualified, two counts of dangerous driving, assaulting a peace officer with a weapon, possession of methamphetamine, mischief under \$5,000 and failing to comply with a proba-

tion order.

A 27-year-old Huron-Kinloss woman is scheduled to appear in criminal court on Oct. 9 and has been charged with two counts of possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000 and possession of methamphetamine.



Joanne and Kevin Stewart have owned a dairy farm in Kincardine for more than 30 years. (Barb McKay photo)

SUI investigates police shooting in Whitechurch

Two people, including a police officer, were injured in a shooting in Huron-Kinloss early Friday morning.

According to an OPP report, Huron County OPP officers stopped a motor vehicle on Whitechurch Street near

Whitechurch just before 12:30 a.m. for a traffic violation. Police then had an interaction with one of the occupants of the vehicle, which led to a police shooting. Two men have since been arrested and taken into custody.

One officer and one suspect were taken to a local hospital where they were both treated and later released with non-life threatening injuries.

The OPP has notified the province's Special Investigations Unit

(SIU) which has invoked its mandate. As a result, the OPP will not be able to provide any further information. Any other inquiries should be directed to SIU Communications at 416-622-2342.

The paper of record

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