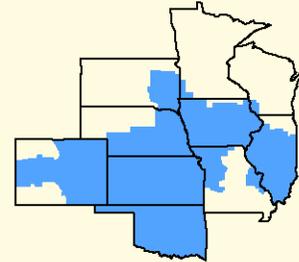


MARCH 2026

Marketing Service

# Bulletin

Facilitating the efficient marketing of milk and dairy products.



CENTRAL MARKETING AREA

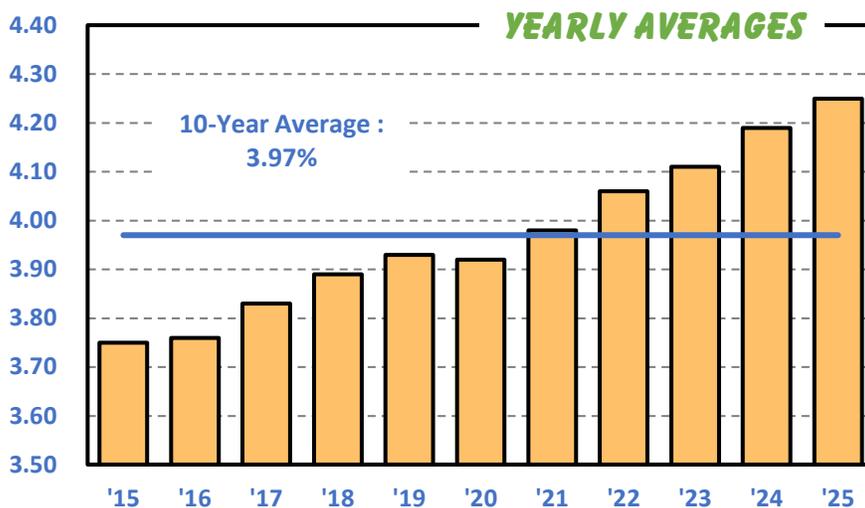


## CENTRAL ORDER COMPONENT VALUES

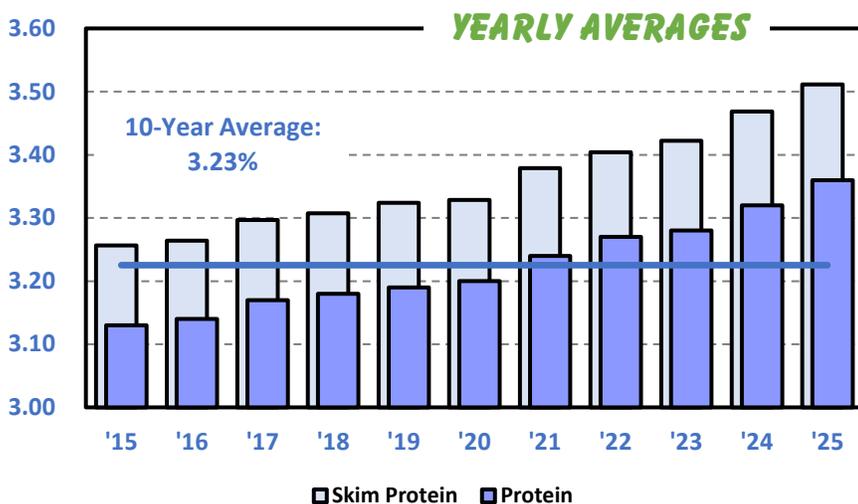
Provisions of the Central Federal Milk Order (FMO) specify minimum payments to producers based on the volume of milk marketed -- the producer price differential (PPD) -- along with payments based on the amount of components in milk marketed. Component payments to producers include those for butterfat, protein and other solids, as well as an adjustment based on the somatic cell count (SCC) of marketed milk. Since the implementation of the Central FMO, the combined value for these individual components have accounted for more than 90% of the total minimum amount due to producers.

This Bulletin examines component levels in Central FMO producer milk over the last 10 years. Specifically, average annual content data for each priced component and the SCC are graphically displayed, as are 2015 through 2025 monthly averages. The top graph on this page displays annual butterfat test averages for Central FMO producer milk. Average annual butterfat tests bottomed out at 3.75% in 2015, and have exhibited substantial upward movement since then, posting an all-time high of 4.25% in 2025. Annual butterfat averages have had year over year increases in nine of the last ten years, with 2024 having the largest single year increase of 0.08 percentage points.

### Butterfat Test

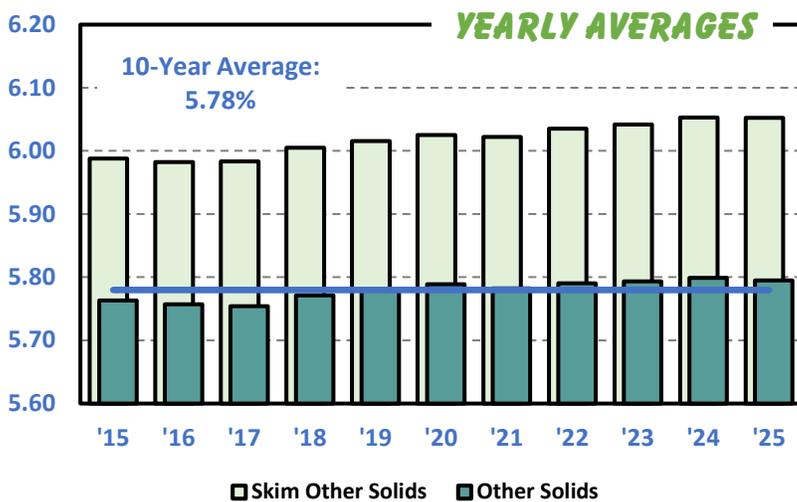


### Protein Test



The lower graph on this page details average protein content for the Central FMO over the last 10 years. Although changes in protein and butterfat content in producer milk typically follow similar patterns, data for the Central FMO indicates that this correlation is far from perfect. Average annual protein tests have exhibited an overall increasing trend on the Central FMO, rising by .23 percentage points in 10 years. Protein tests have increased every year in the last ten years with 2024 and 2025 seeing the largest year over year increase of 0.04 percentage points. The average skim protein tests over this same ten year period was 3.36%.

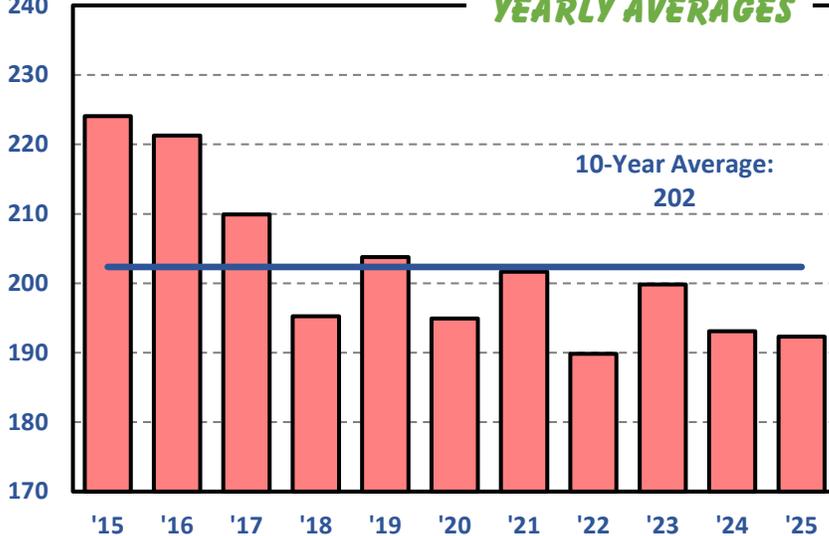
## Other Solids Test



The top graph on this page depicts annual Central FMO other solids tests. As indicated by this graph, the variation in other solids content is smaller than the variance for butterfat or protein. The highest average other solids test occurred in 2024 and 2025 at 5.80%, while the low of 5.75% was recorded in 2017. This reveals a high to low variance of just 0.05 percentage points compared with 0.50 for butterfat, and 0.20 for protein during this time frame. The average skim other solids test for this same ten year period was 6.02%.

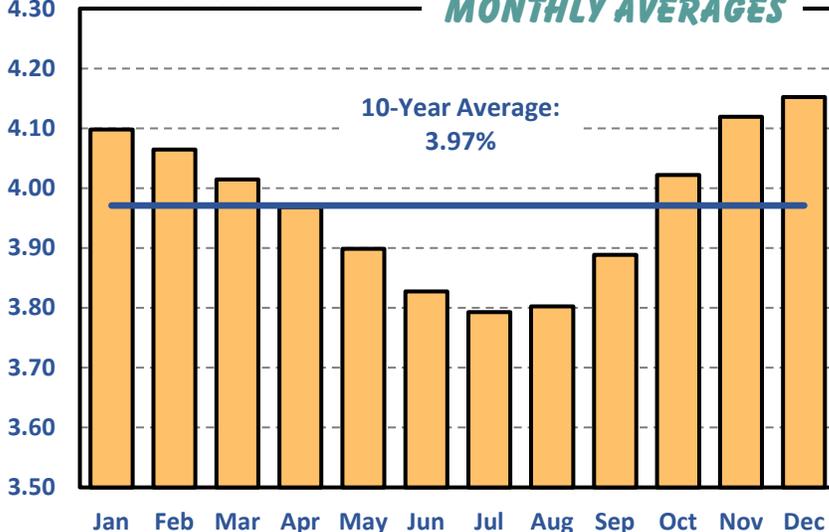
The middle graph on this page displays SCC data for the Central FMO. The trend in SCCs has been downward over the past 10 years. 2015 through 2018 saw large year over year decreases dropping from 224 to 195 in just a few short years. From then to 2024 SCCs fluctuated up and down but continued trending down. Since 2015 SCCs have decreased from 225 to 192, a 14.6% reduction.

## SCC (thousands)



Average monthly butterfat tests, depicted by the bottom graph on this page, indicates a distinctive seasonal trend. Over the past 10 years, butterfat tests have bottomed out in July at an average of 3.79%, while continuing to increase in value each month through December where it peaks at 4.15%. Conversely, the average butterfat content decreased each month between December and July during this time frame. The distinctive and consistent "stair-step" up and down pattern is evident in this graphical representation and shows the seasonality of components.

## Butterfat Test

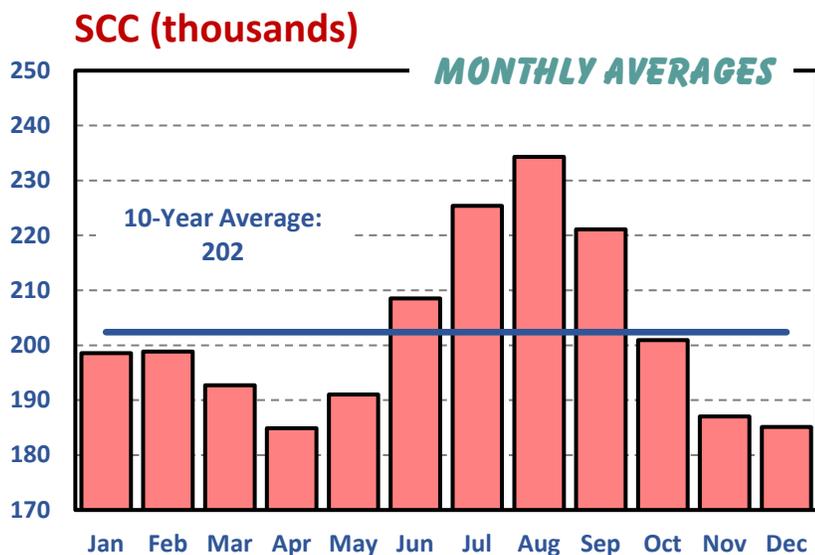
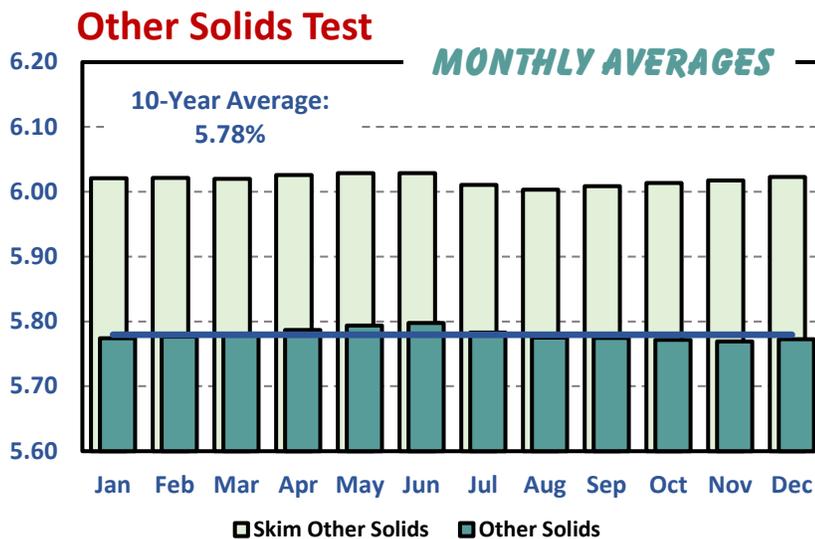
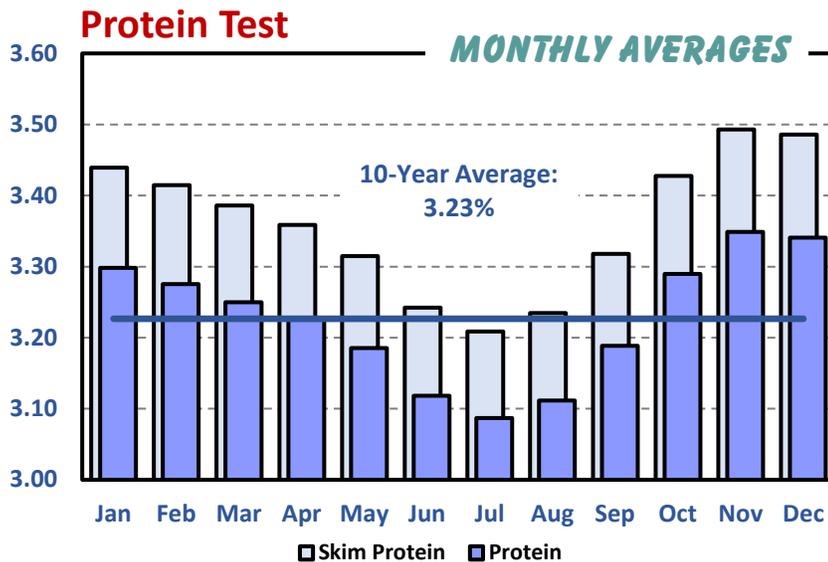


Monthly protein test averages are portrayed in the top graph on the next page. The seasonal trend for protein is similar to butterfat, with some minor idiosyncrasies. The lowest monthly average protein test over the past 10 years occurred in July at 3.09%, identical to butterfat. Protein tests have peaked a month earlier than butterfat, however, with the highest levels recorded in November at 3.35%. Similar to butterfat, protein tests decline each month after the peak and bottom out in July. July's skim protein test over this time frame averaged 3.21%, while the November peak averaged 3.49%.

Central FMO monthly other solids tests reveal a seasonal pattern dissimilar to those for butterfat and protein, as depicted by the middle graph on this page. The peak months for other solids tests over the past 10 years has been April through June with a high of 5.80%, while August through December registered the lowest averages at 5.77%. In addition, other solids tests have not exhibited the consistent "stair-step" up and down pattern, nor the amount of high to low variation, characterized by butterfat and protein average monthly tests. Skim other solid tests over this period peaked in June at 6.03% with August having the lowest average at 6.00%.

The bottom graph on this page is a graphic representation of average monthly SCCs for the Central FMO, and the pattern depicted is substantially different from butterfat, protein, and other solids. Comparing the SCC pattern with the one for other solids reveals test changes moving in opposite directions during many months. SCCs have peaked at 234,000 during hot summer months, while are at their lowest of 185,000 during late fall and early winter.

Numerous factors can influence component levels in producer milk. As depicted by the monthly graphs in this bulletin, component content in producer milk is seasonal in nature indicating weather has a significant influence. Related to this, the geographic "footprint" (milkshed) for a FMO can also affect component content since, other things being equal, component levels tend to decrease for milk produced in hotter, more humid conditions while SCC levels tend to rise. The Central FMO milkshed has shifted over the years, and this shifting has likely had an influence on changing component levels. Additional factors such as breed selection, genetic composition of dairy herds, feeding practices, etc. are also potential explanatory influences for the component trends detailed in this bulletin.





**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
OLATHE, KS  
PERMIT NO. 377

**FEDERAL MILK MARKET ADMINISTRATOR**

P.O. BOX 14650

SHAWNEE MISSION, KANSAS 66285-4650

**FIRST CLASS**

Website: [www.fmmacentral.com](http://www.fmmacentral.com)

E-mail: [market.administrator@fmmacentral.com](mailto:market.administrator@fmmacentral.com)

Phone: 913-495-9300

	<b>Statistical Uniform Price</b>		<b>Producer Price Differential</b>		<b>Class I Utilization</b>	
	<b>Feb '26</b>	<b>Jan '26</b>	<b>Feb '26</b>	<b>Jan '26</b>	<b>Feb '26</b>	<b>Jan '26</b>
Northeast	17.31	16.64	2.37	2.05	28.69	28.88
Appalachian	19.69	20.32	-----	-----	73.73	78.06
Florida	20.65	21.30	-----	-----	79.00	81.27
Southeast	20.14	20.79	-----	-----	76.13	82.14
Upper Midwest	15.52	15.05	0.58	0.46	9.98	12.25
<b>Central</b>	<b>16.33</b>	<b>15.75</b>	<b>1.39</b>	<b>1.16</b>	<b>30.68</b>	<b>32.30</b>
Mideast	16.44	15.92	1.50	1.33	31.15	32.23
California	16.04	14.85	1.10	0.26	23.13	18.65
Pacific Northwest	16.47	15.17	1.53	0.58	34.25	25.66
Southwest	16.55	15.97	1.61	1.38	29.35	25.67
Arizona	16.26	15.23	-----	-----	28.07	27.79

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