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Proposed Pennsylvania Brand Egg Program Discussed Here

"Shall We Market Pennsylvania Brand Eggs?" was the subject Thursday night of the first of a series of three meetings at the Farm and Home Center.

Earl Hess, president of Hess Bros., Ephrata, started the discussion by noting that "we're finally beginning to recognize the need for strong unity." Stating that today it's almost impossible to buy even a fountain pen that is not branded, he said that the egg industry "can't afford not to brand eggs."

Federal Red Tart Cherry Marketing Order Issued

A Federal marketing order for red tart cherries grown in Michigan, New York, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland was issued recently by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The order was slated to become effective January 23.

USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service said that results of a referendum held in December indicated that 71 per cent of the growers voting, accounting for 75 per cent of the production voted, and processors who froze or canned 64 per cent of the red tart cherries, favored the order.

C&MS said the order authorizes limiting the total quantity of red tart cherries which may be marketed in a particular year, and provides for assigning cherries in excess of the limit to a reserve pool. The reserve would be used to supplement supplies during short-crop years.

The order is based on evidence presented to USDA in a public hearing in June. It will be administered locally by a 12-member board — composed of six growers and six processors — which will recommend marketing limits to USDA. The board members will be selected by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominations submitted by the red tart cherry industry.

Crops, Soils Day Slated

The annual Crops and Soils Day sponsored by the Lancaster County Agricultural Extension Service, will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday, February 23 at the Farm and Home Center.

Arnold G. Lueck, associate Lancaster County agricultural agent, said the educational program will emphasize current recommendations and practices relating to the 1971 growing season. Extension agronomists from Penn State will provide information on field corn, hay, silages, weed control, fertility practices, a report on no till corn, and soil and water conservation.

In addition, agri-business firms and their representatives will have displays and exhibits for farmers.

In order to remain competitive, poultrymen are going to have to brand their product, he said, citing a Cornell University study which indicated that 28 per cent of products in supermarkets are now under private label, up considerably in recent years. The study also showed that private label usually results in greater profit and more sales.

"We must let the consumer feel that there is only one egg, the Pennsylvania egg," he stated.

Despite pressure on egg producers to take lower prices, he said he doesn't think this has to be the case. "We have markets, it's a matter of how we develop those markets."

Hess said he thinks the big advantage of a Pennsylvania Brand program for the producer would be to secure a guaranteed price for the product. The biggest advantages of such a program, however, he said, would be to equipment dealers, breeders, carton suppliers, and others. Producers should insist that the equipment and supply firms support the program, Hess said.

Mitchell's Remarks

Mel Mitchell, sales manager Victor F. Weaver Inc., New Holland, emphasized that marketing practices are changing. Today is the age of consumerism. The consumer is boss. The retailer is no longer boss, Mitchell explained.

He noted the present procedure involves marketing under the private brand in which a store may buy from 10 or 15 producers and sell the eggs under its own brand name. "As long as we're going to put our eggs in someone else's carton

and sell the commodity, there is no salvation."

Mitchell says, however, that it won't be easy to get another brand of egg into the store to compete with the store's own brand. It will be necessary to by-pass the store buyer and go to top store management. The buyer is only oriented to buy according to price and often is not aware of modern merchandising techniques or consumer preferences, he explained.

The success of the brand program will depend on getting the store to use better displays and better advertising techniques. It will be necessary to



Earl Hess
Urges Brand Program

emphasize positive aspects of the food value of the egg, such as the egg's high protein value, rather than letting negative publicity on such issues as cholesterol dominate the public's information about the egg, he noted.

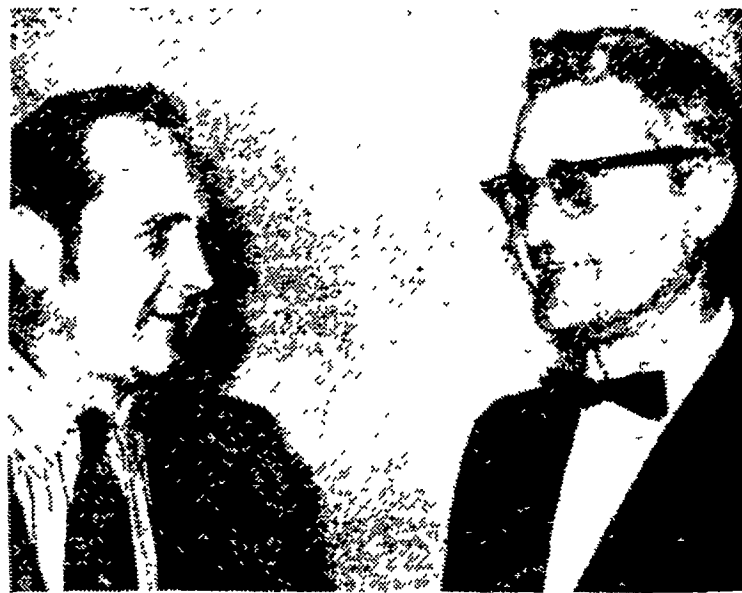
But these extra things, better advertising and display are not possible as long as the egg industry continues to sell "a commodity." There simply isn't enough money for the extras under the commodity approach. The value of the brand egg program is that it provides a higher price which can allow extra money to accomplish these extras, Mitchell said.

He also said the responsibility for such a program lies with the marketers and not the producers. He said he's convinced the brand egg program is "here to stay and we can do the job."

Birth Comments

The third speaker on the Brand Egg program was Kermit Birth, Penn State poultry marketing specialist. Birth emphasized that the success of the brand egg program will hinge on supplying eggs of uniform quality 52 weeks a year. "If we don't have something inside the package so that the consumer will be willing to buy week after week, we have nothing."

Noting that the mortality of new products is very high, and



Mel Mitchell, on the left, Victor F. Weaver, Inc., sales manager, chats with Kermit Birth, Penn State poultry marketing specialist, after the two men spoke to local poultrymen Thursday night on the brand egg program.

Harrisburg Meeting Set To Review U.S. Egg Act

The new Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture James A. McHale, has called a public meeting for 11 a.m. Thursday, March 11 to give Pennsylvania egg producers, packers, and processors a firsthand opportunity to learn how the new Federal Egg Products Inspection Act will apply to them.

At the meeting in Room 309, Agriculture Building, Harrisburg, representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be on hand to discuss requirements of the Act and how they will be activated. The men will also be available for questions.

Donald O. Cunnion, acting director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Markets urged egg producers, packers and processors to attend the meeting. "You will get the facts in time to make whatever adjustments may be necessary in your operations. We believe you will find the meeting well worth your time and trouble."

Provisions of the new Federal Egg Products Inspection Act dealing with egg products become effective June 30 of this year. Provisions dealing with shell eggs take effect June 30, 1972.

Swine Meeting Slated

A meeting on swine management and the swine industry outlook will be held at the Farm and Home Center at 7:30 p.m. Monday.

Speakers and their subjects are as follows: Louis Moore, Penn State extension economist, "Hog Outlook and Swine Futures"; Dwight Younk, Penn State livestock specialist, "Managing the Swine Herd."

Farm Calendar

Saturday, February 13
State Grange regional Institute
Greensburg

Monday, February 15
Swine Management Meeting,
Farm and Home Center

Tuesday, February 16
1:30 p.m. — Cerey Growers Meeting, Jay Kodecker Cerey Farm, East Petersburg.
7:30 p.m. — Cattle Feeder's Meeting, Farm and Home Center.
7:30 p.m. — Ephrata Young Farmers Monthly Meeting on Animal Health, Vocational Agriculture Department, Ephrata Area High School.
7:30 p.m. — Farm and Home Foundation board of directors, Farm and Home Center.
Garden Spot Young Farmers, Farm Records meeting, Vocational Agriculture Department, Garden Spot High School.

Wednesday, February 17
9:30 a.m. — 3 p.m. — Southeastern Pennsylvania Plant and Pest Seminar, Holiday Inn, King of Prussia, February 17 and 18.
7:30 p.m. — Adult Horse Science meeting, Metropolitan Edison Auditorium, Reading.
8 p.m. — 4-H Club Skating Party, Rocky Springs Park.

Thursday, February 18
10 a.m. — Chester County Dairy Day, Sadsburyville Fire Hall, Sadsburyville.

10 a.m. — 8 p.m. — Turkey meeting sponsored by the Pennsylvania Poultry Federation and NEPPCO Turkey Division, Treadway Inn, Lebanon.

Chester County Livestock Day, 10 a.m., swine, Zinn's Diner, Thonndale, 7:30 p.m., beef and 4-H swine, Central Chester County Vo-Tech School.

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