

# Pennsylvania Farmers Association Urge Stronger Milk Marketing Law

Members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly were urged to take a frontal attack on three major issues facing the legislators. The request came in a speech delivered by Eugene Thompson, vice president, Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA), to more than 350 farmers and legislators attending a banquet at the Penn Harris Motor Inn.

PFA is a general farm organization with more than 15,704 members, representing 47 county associations. It is affiliated with the largest general farm organization in the world — The American Farm Bureau Federation.

Thompson, chairman of the group's legislative committee, called for action to strengthen the Milk Marketing Law, restoration of appropriations in the governor's budget for state meat inspection, and final approval of reforms in the area of farmland assessment.

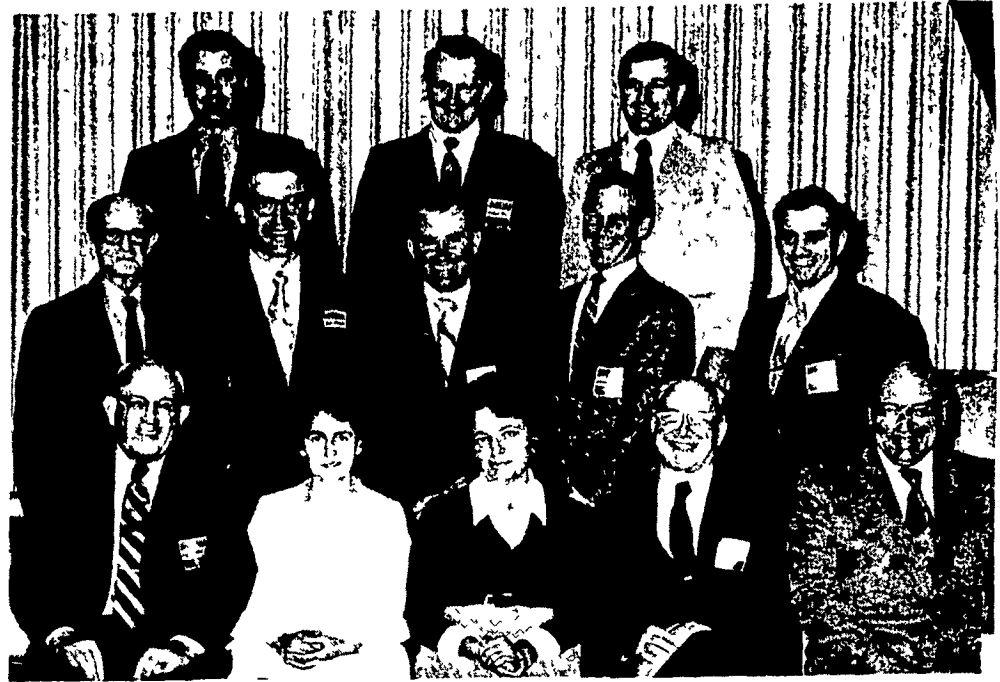
"The PFA Dairy Division suggested three changes in the Milk Marketing Law," the Indiana County dairyman stated, "which would result in savings to the consumers and not wreck the

total marketing system within the milk industry. Changes in the law might be necessary, but we don't believe it necessary to destroy the milk marketing structure in Pennsylvania just so we can say there has been a change.

"Governor Shapp proposed a new milk marketing program, and certainly there were some items in his proposal that would benefit the overall milk marketing program. It was the decision of the dairy division members . . . to stick with our present system of establishing minimum resale prices for milk.

Our present system has stood the test. We know what it can do from its performance record, and there has not been any evidence produced by anyone showing that today's problems cannot be resolved within the framework of our present milk marketing structure. Instead of finding means by which to destroy the milk marketing law, we should seek ways in which to strengthen it."

Switching to the subject of meat inspection, the farm leader called for "immediate action to save the state meat inspection program" PFA has been one of



A 10-member delegation represented the Lancaster County Farmers Association at the annual Pennsylvania Farmers Association State legislative dinner and briefings in Harrisburg recently. Members of the local delegation and State Legislators included: front row, left to right, Representative Sherman Hill; Mrs.

Ivan Yost; Mrs. Helen Wivell; Senator Richard Snyder, and Representative Harry Gring. Second row, Roy Greider, Noah Wenger, Harold Rohrer, William Dean and John Henry Brubaker. Back row, Ivan Yost, Richard Hess and James Kreider, president of Lancaster County Farmers Association.

the chief critics of the way the state meat inspection program is being operated, which was acknowledged by Thompson: "We are not satisfied with the efforts to improve the program to date, but the department is thinking in the right direction. We know the program would go steadily downhill as far as the small meat establishment is concerned if the federal government takes over."

In the five states where the federal government has taken

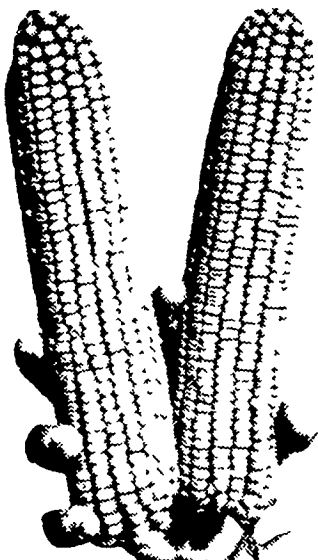
over "the program has suffered greatly . . . Nearly 50 percent of the plants, jobs and revenues generated were lost" in the switch from state to federal, according to Thompson. "The federal inspection program is not geared to the small operator. It's geared to the large meat plants."

PFA has been actively supporting reforms in land assessment because it feels agriculture is "paying an unfair" share of the tax load. "The General Assembly approved

farmland assessment legislation which was a vital first step toward changing the constitution of the Commonwealth. This revision would permit land to be taxed on use and not on the wishful thinking of some housing developer.

"The next big step will require approval by the new General Assembly which starts meeting in January," Thompson concluded as he urged legislative support for the proposed legislation.

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