

8000 Farmers Attend Annual NFO Meeting

by Mrs. Alvin T. Detweiler
Secretary, Bucks Co. NFO

Approximately 8,000 farmer delegates to the National Farmers Organization annual convention at Louisville, Kentucky, heard their president, Oren Lee Staley announce that for the first time in history, farmers in some areas will get \$8 Cwt. in December for manufacturing milk. "NFO is now the third largest handler of milk in the U.S. and is the first of the large handlers to return such a price to the farmer," Staley said. "NFO is the first handler to write cost-of-production contracts for milk, recently, and since so many of NFO's milk contracts are in effect in the Minnesota-Wisconsin area where the price of manufacturing milk is the basis for all class I milk price in the federal orders across the U. S., dairymen here in the East are reaping the benefit of the NFO activity. We've raised milk prices very systematically and methodically and we've left behind those who said that \$5 manufacturing milk was 'pie-in-the-sky'."

Concerning the energy crisis, Staley said, "First the officials had better decide how serious the

energy crisis is in this country, and then they must decide how important it is that farmers have enough fuel to raise the crops. Next in importance is an adequate supply of fuel for transportation to haul that food."

The ribbon-cutting ceremony on a ten-car grain hopper unit at a railroad siding in Louisville was another highlight of the annual convention. The ten-car unit was only a token of the 610 grain hopper cars that NFO has leased this year to transport the grain volume that NFO members block together for selling on contracts. This amount of cars bring NFO into the "big league" with companies such as Cargill and Continental, in movement of grain, according to Shelly Robertson, Head of NFO's Grain Commodity Department. "Transportation is the name of the game, and we now book barges a year in advance," Robertson noted. "We move NFO grain on every major river system in the United States." Robertson believes we will see the consolidation or merger of the large grain companies in the future, equal to the mergers among the dairy cooperatives. Delegates were warned by Bill

Lashmet, Head of NFO's Meat Department, that corporations and integrators are stepping up the drive to take over U. S. agricultural production. He said, "plans are drawn up for a single corporate hog lot that will displace about 5,000 family farms and could produce about 3 percent of the country's pork needs, at Kohoka, Missouri. It is a joint project of Swift and Co. and Ralston-Purina, the packers and feed companies that helped take chicken and egg production out of the family farmer's hands. If this conglomerate gets away with it, then, in the future, the nation's milk will be produced in 5,000 to 10,000 cow herds, and beef production will follow the same pattern, to the disadvantage of farmers and consumers as well.

"Consumers are still paying top prices for meat," Lashmet continued. "Retail prices are only 2 percent lower at the same time that farm prices for meat have dropped 30 percent, and as things stand today, a serious shortage in meat could result. The NFO is moving to stabilize and improve cattle, hog and sheep prices. Since we came to Louisville for this convention, we have signed a contract for fed cattle which will relate the farmer's return to wholesale prices, stabilize live animal supply, packing plant efficiency and offal value. Also since the convention convened, the NFO has been formally offered a written, long-term contract for hogs by a major packer with a guaranteed minimum price related to the cost of production of the hogs."

"It is significant to get such an offer from a major packer," Lashmet said. "It is the first of its kind in history, and we are going to submit it to our members to get their views. The contract illustrates the advantage of marketing large blocks of production. An individual producing only 1000 fed cattle a year could not obtain such a contract."

Those attending a pre-convention meeting heard Jon Wefald, Minnesota's Commissioner of Agriculture, state that American agriculture is the largest single industry in the United States. Its assets amount

Order 4 Milk Price Up 42¢

The Nov. uniform price for base milk increased 42 cents from the previous month, according to Andrew A. Martin, Ephrata, field representative for Inter-State Milk Producers Cooperative. Excess milk showed a decrease of 16 cents. The base milk price was \$9.07, excess was \$6.95, and the butterfat differential was 8.6 cents.

In comparison to Nov. levels one year ago base milk was up \$1.76 and excess up \$1.56.

The weighted average price for the market was increased by \$1.75, above Nov. 1972.

A total of 358.6 million pounds of producer milk was pooled in Nov. of which 69.32 percent was sold as Class I, showing an increase of 1.27 percent of deliveries made in October, and increased .09 percent over Nov. a year ago. 7884 Order No. 4 producers provided 11.9 million pounds per day to dealers during Nov., averaging 1516 pounds per day per farm. Total value of producer milk was set at \$31,685,610.40 for the month.

to upwards of \$370 billion or three-fifths of the amount of all U. S. industrial corporations. Twenty percent of the labor force in the U. S. are used by agriculture. This year gross farm receipts in the U. S. will be \$20 billion higher than last year. We are always talking about moving new industry into rural areas to provide more jobs and provide more taxes, but \$20 billion means that much extra purchasing power in our rural areas. It is the equivalent of 18,000 brand new industries with the equivalent payrolls of \$1 million each a year. Never have more than 200 industries been moved by any other effort in one year in the U. S. That should tell us what would be done for the economy if we paid our farmers fair prices.

Members delegates unanimously re-elected their president, Oren Lee Staley, and their Vice President, DeVon Woodland by acclamation.

Those attending the convention from Bucks County were: Stanley Landis, RD4, Quakertown; Bill Garges, Warrington; Victor Pisarek, Pineville; Louis Fink, Jr., Ottsville; Ernest Andre, M.R., Chalfont; Jack Clark, RD2, New Hope; Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Detweiler Doylestown, RD1 and Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Anders, Morrisville, attended as guests of the Bucks County delegation.

Other area persons attending were: Leland Stanford, Dillsburg, RD1, York Co., Philip Snyder, RD1, New Tripoli, Lehigh Co., Stanley Kokohlus, RD1, Coplay, Lehigh Co.

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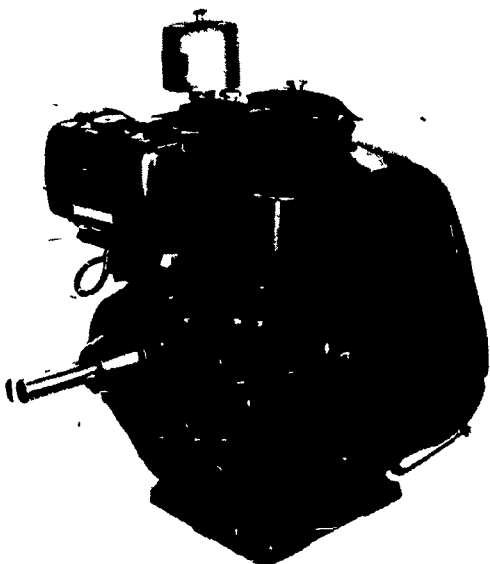
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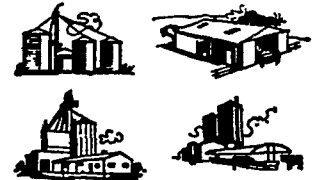
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