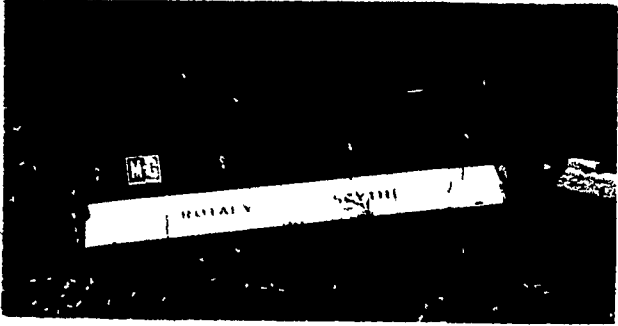


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Eastern's York critical of truckers' strike settlement

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — John C. York, general manager of Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative, stated this week in a letter to William Seidman, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, that the recent settlement on the new labor contract between the teamsters union and the trucking industry will have a further serious impact on the cost of producing milk. Dairy farmers are not in any position to absorb higher costs, and, consequently, the dairy industry can very well be facing disaster, said York.

The increase in wages reported in the terms of the

contract, which Secretary of Labor W. J. Usery, Jr. helped work out, calls for \$1.65 per hour increase in wages, a cost of living formula to reflect the changes in wages, as well as other fringe benefits. It is further reported that this new contract provides between 30 and 36 percent increase in wages over the next three years, noted York.

The dairy leader contends that, with such a target price of at least 130 percent above parity for wages compared to 80 percent of parity as a target price for milk to dairy farmers, some immediate action must be taken. The dairy industry cannot survive with such disparity as exists between its industry and another important industry.

Consequently, York continued, we are calling upon chairman Seidman to schedule a meeting between Secretary of Labor W. J. Usery, Jr., Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz, and representatives of Eastern Milk Producers to discuss this matter with the view in mind of coming to some solution to the problem. The dairy industry is entitled to know what they can likely expect by way of target prices three years in advance, whether or not they are entitled to a cost of living formula, and to what extent appropriate government agencies will provide assistance in developing a legal program that will assure some possibility of a continuous viable dairy industry.

Eastern's general manager stated that the wage increase given labor in the recent truckers' strike settlement will be extremely costly to both dairy farmers and consumers of milk and dairy products.

Whereas, financially

depressed dairy farmers and their cooperative organizations have been badgered with extreme scrutiny of recent date, the Administration in Washington, D.C. has apparently given the U.S. Department of Labor a free hand without fear of reprisal in escalating the inflationary price trend, observed York.

This strike settlement will raise prices on everything purchased by dairy farmers and other consumers, reasoned York.

When the housewife is alarmed over the rise in cost of a basket of food, who is she going to blame? Is it going to be the depressed producer down on the farm, his

cooperative organizations, the so-called middleman who must pay these inflationary wages from depleted financial resources or labor? questioned the dairy leader.

"Equal rights has taken a serious backward step," charged York. If equality is the rule of the day in America, why not the dairy farmer receiving a like increase in return for his labor? Who is more deserving - one efficient American farmer who now feeds nearly 55 people or those in many segments of our economy who have not begun to equal the farmer's ability to work seven days a week and increase production with so little in monetary return for his efforts? he concluded.

Runoff legislation not as bad as expected

NEW HOLLAND — Land legislation isn't expected to be as bad as was first expected, according to Lisle Dutton of Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative. Nevertheless, the public relations director for the 8,000-member dairy cooperative says "environmentalists are not being realistic ... we're going to have to draw the line somewhere ... Eastern will fight this all the way down through."

He cautions that when a farmer goes out of business today, it's not just a little farm anymore, in many cases.

Legislation as he interprets it calls for cows to be kept out of streams if the land or surface they're on is not a "true" pasture. Pasture is defined as an area which supports desirable vegetation, as opposed to a mere exercise lot which is void of grass.

The dairy coop leader further cautions dairymen about choices they make in manure handling systems. According to Dutton, studies are showing that the problems involved in storing and handling liquid manure far outweigh the benefits. "Conventional systems may be the way to go," he said "store manure under roof and handle it with a front end loader and conventional spreader."

"Be sure you have some real good guidance before you make any decisions," he concluded.

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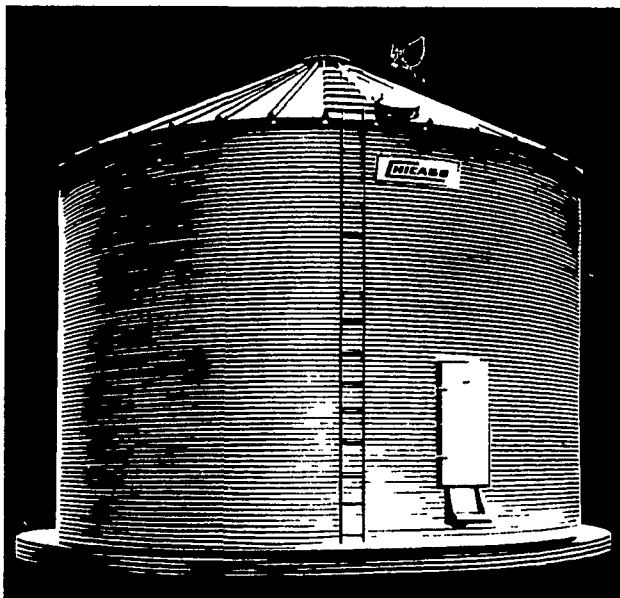
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