

Change in farm policy direction and implementation called for

SYRACUSE, N.Y. - John C. York, General Manager of the 8000 dairy farmer-member Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative, has urged that everyone engaged in agriculture must immediately get a commitment from all candidates running for political office to support a new agricultural policy implemented on a regional basis. York has called for such a program.

In issuing the request from Eastern's headquarters here, York stressed that the program should be one which will return to agricultural producers their costs of production plus a reasonable profit. He charged that farmers are the last to see their income rise and the first to see it decline—the first to see their costs of production climb and the last

to see them fall. Such a whipsaw squeeze, he noted, has been the history of agriculture and it must now be changed.

"Agricultural producers are entitled to at least that amount of income afforded other segments of our economy, whether it be labor or industry," York commented. Currently, he said, Class I (fluid) milk prices have dropped in the New York - New Jersey Federal Milk Marketing Order from \$11.39 per hundred pounds in October to \$10.86 in November and estimated \$10.60 in December. The same relationship holds true in the other Orders throughout the Northeast.

Normally, these prices are rising at this time of year, York noted. He said that this price turn-around is oc-

curing in the face of predicted signs of inflation and climbing farm costs.

The Co-op leader said farmers should not be encouraged to over-produce, but should be encouraged to produce to fit the needs of the market. Over-production, he said, creates more disorder, causes farm prices to fall, and eventually is costly to farmers themselves. "No other industry carries on such a foolish program, and the government should be required to prevent agricultural producers from undermining their own industry," York charged.

Best estimates available conclude that 1977 milk prices are likely to be less than average prices in 1976, he noted. On the other hand, he said, inflation goes on and costs of production continue

to spiral. A new direction in our national pricing policy for agriculture, York stressed.

Eastern's general manager then suggested what should be done, saying "The first order of business would be to require the Congress of United States to amend the Agricultural Agreement Act setting a new farm pricing policy predicted on a formula that would reflect cost of production and a reasonable profit. This would once and for all eliminate the confusion and the unfortunate interpretations that are being made that the Agricultural Agreement Act provides a minimum price to farmers. The Act should be made crystal clear that the price should reflect, first of all, the cost of production and a reasonable profit to be adjusted by supply and demand conditions. Such a new pricing policy could then be implemented within the various milk marketing orders throughout the country. It would be a reasonable price, a fair price, and a price that would sustain the dairy industry to the interest of the total economy of the country."

"It is not too late yet, said York. The challenge is before every agricultural leader." Let us not allow our politicians to escape or become elected with no commitment to a sound pricing policy basis for agriculture. That price should be no less than what other segments of our economy are assured, he concluded.

Society 9

Berks County Society of Farm Women, Group 9 held their October meeting at the home of Mrs. Pat Haas with nine members and one guest present.

Christmas presents for the Hamburg State School will be purchased by Mrs. Sue Hendricks and Pat Haas before the November meeting.

Plans were also made for the group's annual Christmas party to be held Saturday, December 11, at Sunnybrook, Pottstown.

Group 9 will sponsor a hoagie sale on Saturday, October 23. Hoagies will be made at the U.C.C. Church, Amityville.



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Poultry restrictions urged

New York, N.Y. - The threat of exotic Newcastle disease, which could be introduced into the U.S. by imported poultry, birds or products, was the main topic of concern to the Advisory Committee on Poultry Health of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The 16-member committee, representing consumers, the pet bird industry and all facets of the poultry industry, took a strong stand about possible movement of foreign poultry diseases into the United States and urged USDA to take stronger measures to insure the safety of domestic poultry, pet and game birds.

The committee met Oct. 5, at the Hyattsville, Md., offices of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). To protect American birds, the committee recommended that USDA discontinue allowing individuals to bring in caged

pet birds without the birds going through a USDA supervised or operated quarantine station to make sure that they are healthy.

The committee also recommended that USDA continue the inspection of all travelers and their baggage coming from Puerto Rico until steps can be taken to eradicate exotic Newcastle disease from that Island.

Turning to domestic poultry health problems, the Committee urged USDA to request funds to adequately operate its programs to control mycoplasmosis and disease investigations of turkey and chicken flocks.

Committee members asked that Customs Service officials be invited to the next Committee meeting to report on actions being taken to stop the smuggling of cage birds into the United States.

Subcommittees were formed to study specific problems. These problems will be acted upon by the full

committee at its next meeting, scheduled for April 1977. This was the first meeting of the Committee, so about half the time was devoted to acquainting committee members with actions and regulations used by USDA to protect the \$6 billion poultry industry from foreign and domestic poultry diseases.



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