

# John York says federal dairy program is not expensive

ALLENTOWN -- Agriculture is entitled to be fairly recognized through government support programs, considering the huge sums of money spent for various other government functions, says a noted dairy industry leader.

John York, former general manager of Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative and now vice president for member and public relations

of Lehigh Valley Cooperative Farmers, notes that government expenditures to buy dairy products are not expensive. "It should be pointed out that expenditures for dairy price supports are relatively small as related to federal outlays," York tells dairy farmers. "During 10 of the last 15 years the per cent of dairy price support expenditures has been equal to

or greater than what it was in 1977," York notes. Last year's net bill for dairy support programs came to \$714.3 million, or 0.2 per cent of all federal outlays.

"Dairy support programs are not expensive when viewed in relation to total government expenditures," York exclaimed, adding that he would be willing to argue that point with anyone. "A healthy dairy industry is probably more important than any other industry," the dairy leader opines.

The problems of handling surplus milk this Spring should not be as difficult as those encountered a year earlier, York continues. "Thus far it has not been as difficult," he affirms. On a



John York


related topic he says, "Some New York dairy cooperatives are selling milk to Order 2 handlers at ridiculously low handling charges. As a consequence,

New York handlers are moving towards making sales in Order 4 and 1 marketing areas at destructively low prices. Vermont passed legislation to protect that state's dairy farmer's against this movement. Meanwhile Johanna Farms, which purchased Order 4 milk from Eastern, Inter-State and some from the Dairymen's League, as well as from independent farmers, has decided to become pooled into Order 2. Thus, their Order 4 purchases have dropped. Cumberland Farms is exploring the same avenue," York says.

York goes on to say that the dairy problem in the Northeast is the New York market. "Its problem should not be imposed on other markets," he declares. To exemplify the situation, he


says that seasonal production patterns in Order 2 are horrible. "In 1977, Order 2's May production was 10 per cent over that of March. Making the same comparison in Orders 1 and 4, the increases come to 7.5 and four per cent, respectively. "Sales are relatively even in Order 4," York notes, adding that "the Northeast is a deficit milk production area. It produces about 19 per cent less milk than is needed to take care of the per capita consumption of milk and dairy products." For that reason, York claims that the dairy industry in the Northeast is still in an "ideal position." The dairy industry leader adds: "I would think that speaks something to the effect that dairy farmers in the area ought to produce milk for the market they live in."

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## Crop, livestock survey in progress

HARRISBURG — State Agriculture Secretary Kent Shelhamer said recently that a nationwide survey to identify 1978 crop acreages and livestock numbers will include contacts with area farmers.

The enumerators, working with the Pa. Crop Reporting Service, will be asking questions about acreages planted for harvest as well as numbers of cattle and hogs. All information will be held confidential, and only state and national estimates will be made available to the public.

Shelhamer said that the objective of the survey is to produce reliable and timely information as a guide to farmers for their marketing

operations. These estimates help stabilize market conditions by providing both growers and buyers with unbiased, official estimates of production. Thus, rumors and trade projections cannot be a factor in setting price or supply levels.

According to the Crop Reporting Service, the report on spring planted acres will be published on June 30 and followed July 11 with estimates of yield and production. Hog and pig numbers will be reported on June 22 while cattle numbers will be released on July 26. For more information, one can contact the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service at 717-787-3904.

The survey will be taken between May 22 and June 2.

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