

# Farmers invited to join egg co-ops

By DIETER KRIEG

**BIRD-IN-HAND** - Egg producers from Lancaster County and surrounding areas were invited to join a regional and national egg producers' cooperative on Tuesday evening. More than 140 egg farmers from the area attended a 4-hour meeting here that was designed to give eggmen a thorough glimpse of what egg organizations can and could do for them.

"We're amazed at how many of you people showed up here tonight; we didn't expect half this many," noted one of the dozen or so speakers who were on the program. The good turnout was taken as a sign that area egg producers felt a need to consider joining an egg cooperative. The response both during and after the meeting was regarded as generally favorable. Several eggmen in the audience questioned cooperative programs and resulting discussions seemed to spur additional interest.

The two organizations which sponsored the area meeting were the Northeast Egg Marketing Association (NEMA) and United Egg Producers, (UEP). NEMA is one of five regional egg organizations which make up UEP. Membership in the regional group automatically includes membership on the national level. Both devote



Among the officials who invited southeastern Pennsylvania egg producers to join NEMA and UEP were, left to right, Bill Rent, general manager of NEMA; Harry Muller, president of UEP; Greg Murch UEP marketing director; Christine

Bushway, AEB promotions coordinator; Charles O'Reilly, NEMA regional manager; and Al Wenger, Dutchland Farms, who will be NEMA president in October.

their time to marketing, promotion, public and governmental relations, and numerous other activities aimed at the common good of the industry. UEP was recently named the outstanding marketing organization among farmer cooperatives.

UEP represents 35 per cent of the egg producers in the United States and 65 per cent of the nation's egg production.

Donald Horn, vice president of Pennfield Corporation, Lancaster, and a NEMA-UEP member, welcomed the group, noting that he was well pleased with the "extremely good attendance." In giving a brief introduction on the purpose of NEMA and UEP, Horn emphasized that the cooperatives' primary objective is to work for the highest possible price in relation to current supply and demand situations. He added, however, that this does not guarantee a profit. Someone in the audience got up and reasoned "We can't have the freedom to prosper without

having the freedom to lose. We can't have one without the other."

Audience participation during the lengthy meeting was strong. Several among the group who were NEMA-UEP members spoke in behalf of the organization. A few questioned programs and purposes of both UEP and NEMA. Nonetheless, all were invited, and even strongly encouraged to join the organizations.

One gentleman questioned the value of advertising and promotion, claiming that although it would increase sales, production would also increase and the overall economic situation wouldn't improve. "What we've got to do is control production," said someone else. While that isn't likely to happen since producers want to keep the right to expand as they see fit, UEP marketing director Greg Murch explained that promotion and advertising programs would lead to a healthy industry.

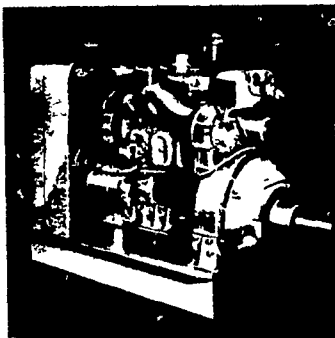
Al Wenger of Dutchland Farms, Elizabethtown, is a NEMA member and president-elect. According to him, the pressures facing individual egg producers are such that each could succumb. "The rope can hang us all individually, but there isn't a rope strong enough to hang us all together," he exclaimed. "We've got to protect our industry for ourselves and our families."

Wenger also noted that NEMA and UEP came to Lancaster because the organizations have recognized the importance of the egg industry in this area. With poultry houses going up rapidly, NEMA and UEP directors

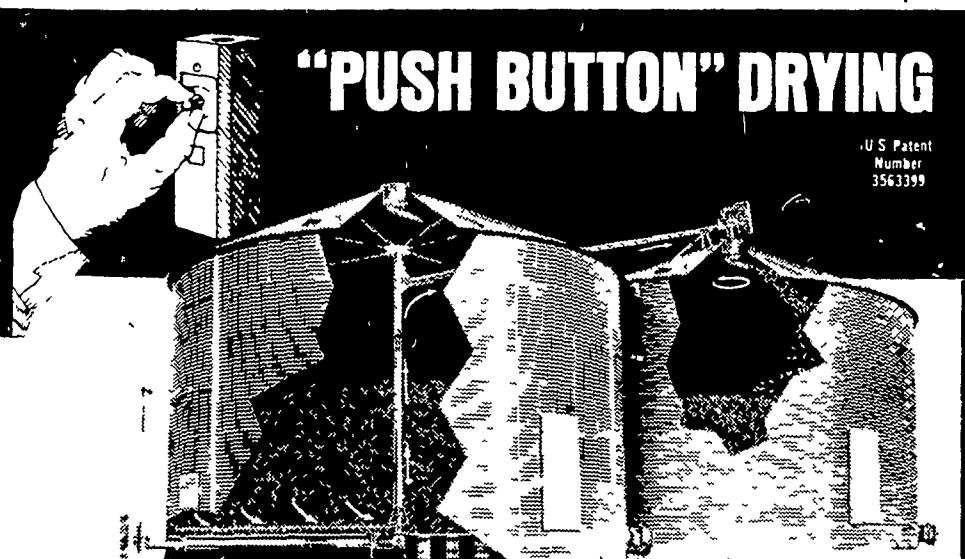
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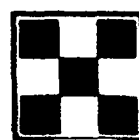
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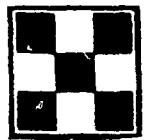
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