

# Pork producers approve boost in checkoff

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — "A giant step forward for pork producers," is how a National Pork Producers Council spokesman sums up that group's move late last Thursday to approve increasing the Council's voluntary market hog checkoff rate.

A 10 cent per hog increase (from 10 to 20 cents) will be implemented January 1981 following action by NPPC's delegate body meeting at the American Pork Congress in St. Louis. The feeder pig checkoff rate of five cents per pig marketed remains unchanged.

Thursday's action came after a day and a half of delegate discussion and consideration of several proposals. Much of the in-

tense discussion centered on whether the checkoff would be based on percentage of value or a flat rate per head.

The additional funding will include allocation of 60 percent of the increase to the Council with the NPPC-member states and National Live Stock and Meat Board each receiving 20 percent of the funding. Funding for the Pork Industry Group of the Meat Board carried the stipulation that the NPPC received additional representation on the Meat Board's policy-making body with election by the NPPC delegates.

The increased funding plan, recommended by NPPC's Planning and Resolutions Committee could, according to NPPC's Orville K. Sweet, executive

vice president, should nearly double funding available for carrying out Council programs. Budget for the past year was \$2.2 million.

"The delegate action," Sweet continued, "is a vivid example of grassroots' action and response to a real industry need." Initial moves for such an increase in the entirely volunteer producer-funding program were launched by delegates at the 1979 Pork Congress.

"Delegate action," Bill Buller, NPPC president, Brookings, SD, said, "came after long, exhausting sessions featuring debate, largely over allocation of funding. However, at the end, the comradeship of pork producers and their typical desire for unity prevailed.

"Pork producers see the

increase as an opportunity for Council growth and came forward in recognizing they alone have the understanding and decision-making power to respond to future industry needs. The delegates were responsive to the groundswell of grassroots' comments on previously approved checkoff proposals," he said.

All pork producers, and the industry as a whole, can justifiably have pride in the delegate action taken here in St. Louis.

Producers for the balance of 1980 will be striving forward to increase checkoff participation within their respective states through the Market Blitz program implemented earlier this year, Buller said. This drive is

aimed at increasing participation from the present 53 percent level to 75 percent giving all involved yet another opportunity to strengthen funding at all levels.

Delegates approved appointment of a permanent checkoff committee to monitor the program to involve and maintain a high level of total producer involvement.

On another issue, delegates in St. Louis voted to table until 1981 action on a proposed political action committee as recommended by the Council's Board.

Delegates before adjourning named five new directors to the executive committee: Russell Rowe, Michigan, to a three-year term; Ed Cox, Arizona, to a three-year term; and Wayne Walter, Kansas, to a three-year term. Arno Moening, Minnesota, was elected to a one-year term to fulfill a vacated unexpired term. Myron Laffoon, Indiana, was elected to the new director's spot created by a change in bylaws. George Belt, Kentucky, was elected to serve as an NPPC member on the National Live Stock and Meat Board.

## Market association seeks produce growers

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN WEST CHESTER — A direct marketing association to assist farmers in finding markets for their produce is operating in the five-county area of Bucks, Montgomery, Lancaster, Berks and Chester.

The non-profit association, headquartered in West Chester, is the Farmer-Consumer Services Association, Inc., which is operated in cooperation with Penn State and the Pa. Dept. of Agriculture.

"We are now seeking to enroll growers in the five-county area who are seeking markets for their produce," George E. Perry, Jr., executive-director of the association, said.

"Working with interested growers, we'll seek markets, such as fruit coops, small stores, roadside stands, state institutions and school districts."

Cost of membership in the association by a grower is a one-time \$5.00 enrollment fee. The association also

charges a five percent commission on sales.

Types of farmer members being specifically sought by the association include growers of sweet corn, canteloupes, tomatoes, cauliflower, eggs, fruit, Easter flowers and bedding plants.

During the past winter season the association worked with a number of apple growers to find juice markets with independent processors.

"We try to bring together and match growers with markets both geographically and according to size," Marie A. Pelno, association manager, said.

In most instances, the association arranges for direct shipment of the produce by the grower to help guarantee a fresher product and minimize handling. But the association does maintain a refrigerated warehouse at West Chester to serve smaller grower volumes and markets.

The association's

marketing program is federally funded under the Farmer to Consumer Direct Marketing Act. It is governed by a seven-member board of growers, including Dick Solly, Bucks County, president; Fred Funk, Lancaster County, vice president; Carlton Groff, Lancaster County, secretary-treasurer; Peter Alexch, Lancaster County; William Dean, Lancaster

County; Byron Hawthorne, Chester County; and Tom Styer, Bucks County.

Interested growers should make early contact with the association to provide sufficient time for establishing summer markets. Contacts can be made at the Farmers-Consumer Services Association office, 880 S. Five Points Rd., West Chester, Pa. 19380, telephone, (215) 436-5316.

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