

Cleona co-op asked to defend marketing system

BY SHEILA MILLER
STOUCHSBURG — Two representatives from the Northeast Dairy Cooperative brought members of the Cleona Milk Producers Cooperative up-to-date on two important pieces of legislation concerning the dairy industry, along with a summary of the current trends in marketing.

Ralph Smith, Director of Education for NEDCO, Syracuse, N.Y. told the dairymen at their Wednesday evening meeting that the co-ops are the foundation of the whole milk marketing system. "Whenever things get tight, co-ops provide the needed outlet for the milk you produce."

He pointed out that prior to 1920, there were only dairy co-ops. But after the Depression and World War I, the government stepped into the dairy industry and created marketing orders.

The orders, he explained, set up an environment where the handlers were required to pay the dairymen the established minimum price based on the intended use of

the milk. This base, he said, was geared to the Minnesota-Wisconsin series because the milk in that area was used primarily for manufacturing.

Today, this price based on supply and demand is declining because now the dairymen in the M-W region are able to market their milk for fluid use, along with manufacturing.

The marketing order was set up to allow dairy farmers to vote and make changes by petition, with the hearing and referendum route following.

Smith pointed out a recent petition filed last Friday calls for a change in Order 2. It calls for a nickel increase in the amount paid for transportation credit and deduction for hauling.

Currently, a 15 cent transportation credit, taken out of the pool, and a 15 cent deduction for hauling, seen as a deduction on the milk check, are said not to be meeting the current costs.

Smith also mentioned the proposal to expand the New York-New Jersey order to

include Northeastern Pennsylvania. This would mean a better milk price for farmers in that area, he said.

Concerning the current marketing trends, Smith pointed out there has been a 25-30 pound drop in per capita consumption of Class I milk in this area. However, nationwide, the 50 billion pounds used for fluid milk has remained steady because of the increased population. But, he said, the type of milk consumed by the population is changing.

In New York, the consumption of skim milk has increased 15 percent from 1972 to 1979, whereas the consumption of whole milk has dropped 23 percent. The number of farms delivering milk in that state has dropped 18 percent, but the average production per farm has gone up 28 percent. In 1972, the average farm produced 476,000 pounds each year, and last year the average was 610,000 pounds. This has been done with 21

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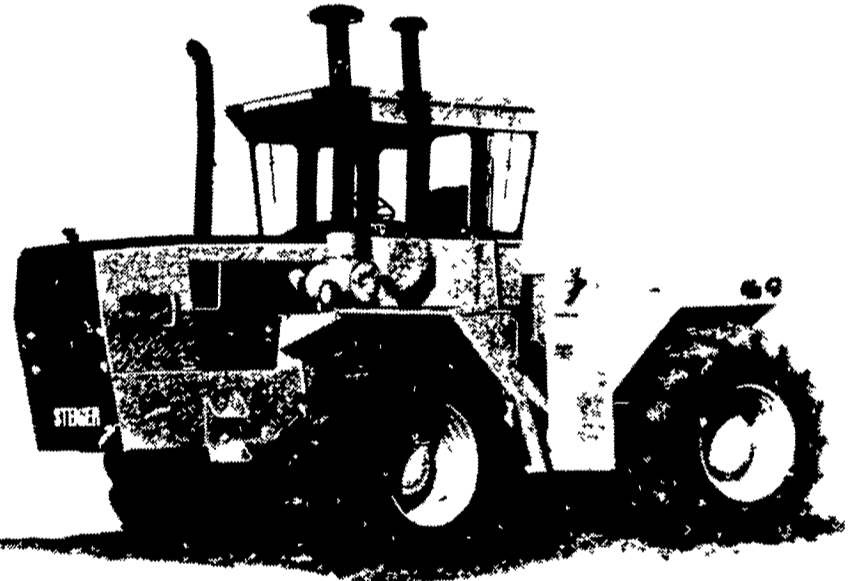


William A. Moore, R1 Myerstown, Secretary of the Cleona Milk Producers Co-op, left, speaks with James Beaver, District Director for Co-op #10, center, and Ralph Smith, NEDCO's director of education.

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