

Here are specifics of milk security proposal

HARRISBURG — It is fairly certain SB 1287, the Milk Security Fund bill, will become law as it is now written.

Provisions of the bill will govern dairymen's lives for many years in much the same way the \$200,000 bonding requirement does today.

The Senate bill actually calls for establishment of two separate security funds in an effort to protect all of the state's dairymen.

One is to be built by cooperatives, The Cooperative Security Fund. It is doubtful anything ever will come of this fund.

Cooperatives are allowed to opt out of the fund by vote of their Board of Directors. General membership approval is not required.

It is a near certainty that all six Pennsylvania co-ops will choose not to participate.

The second fund is the Milk Producers' Security Fund. This fund will be established by contributions from handlers at the rate of one cent per hundredweight milk produced.

The fund will be built to a \$4 million dollar level.

Central to the fund legislation is a plan to accelerate the payment schedule from handlers to farmers.

Because of jumbled jurisdictions between states and the Federal Order system, no specific language is included in SB 1287.

Prompt payment provisions are complicated by the slow payment from government programs, like school lunch, to handlers.

But the legislators made clear they expect action to shorten the present payment interval will be taken once the bill is passed. The Milk Marketing Board is instructed to hold hearings to that end.

Title to milk, under SB 1287 is deemed to be transferred from producer to buyer at the point of first shipment of the milk.

Therefore, milk produced in the Commonwealth and going to an out-of-state buyer is intended to be covered by the fund.

The buyer would be required to obtain license to buy milk in the Commonwealth.

The out-of-state provision

may face a court test once the bill becomes law.

Dealers can obtain alternative bonding on their own or are allowed to offer collateral. The total coverage must cover the amount of milk purchased during any consecutive two month period of the current year.

At the moment, farmers have no lien on a milk dealer's assets and depend on the milk dealer's \$200,000 bond to cover losses.

All too often, the \$200,000 has fallen far short of the total loss.

Under the new proposal,

claims will be allowed up to 75 percent of the loss. This is to assure the fund is not milked dry by a succession of early failures before it can be built to full strength.

Once the fund becomes actuarially sound, farmers could be fully reimbursed via a hearing process. Such a change also is indicated as the intent of the lawmakers.

No claims at all will be allowed against the fund for sales to dealers not licensed by the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board.

Adjustments will be allowed for sales of butter,

cheese, and nonfat dry milk manufactured by a dealer or co-op participating in the milk security fund and to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Dealers and participating cooperatives would be eligible to receive rebates and credits for those manufactured products sold to the government.

The bill was given its second reading by the State Senate this week.

The bill, for the most part, has the support of the state's farmer organizations, the agricultural leaders of both parties in both chambers of

the legislature, the Agriculture Department, dairy co-ops, and other related groups.

A number of its supporters expressed hope the measure could be passed and signed by June Dairy Month, although given the legislative calendar and the number of recesses scheduled that may be a bit ambitious.

But SB 1287 could easily become law before cows have to come in off pasture. And that should help Pennsylvania dairymen sleep easier.—CH

Franklin County Rabbit Club gets visit from Easter bunny

CHAMBERSBURG — The 4-H Rabbit Club in Franklin County got a head start on the Easter Bunny at a recent meeting.

Nancy Funk, Penn State, was the guest speaker. She was accompanied by an assortment of her pet rabbits, ranging from a smaller

Dutch rabbit to one large Flemish Giant rabbit named "Porgy".

The professor began her talk by showing 4-H'ers examples of a few breeds of rabbits. She used her five-day-old rabbits to demonstrate how one can feed baby rabbits with an eye dropper

if a doe should die. She explained that it is possible to save babies using a purchased formula, if one is willing to feed the babies every two hours around the clock.

4-H members darted questions at their guest and laughed as "Porgy" and "B-2" hopped around the room or sat up to beg for cookies.

The speaker concluded her talk by inviting the members and their guests to pick out a

pet rabbit to take home. Ms. Funk has introduced many children to the happiness and responsibility of owning pet rabbits. So far, she has given away 218 of the hoppers to young people willing to raise them as pets.

To show appreciation to the professor for her presentation, Mrs. Wayne Snider of St. Thomas presented to Nancy a cake shaped like a large sitting rabbit surrounded by smaller rabbits.

Wool pool dates listed

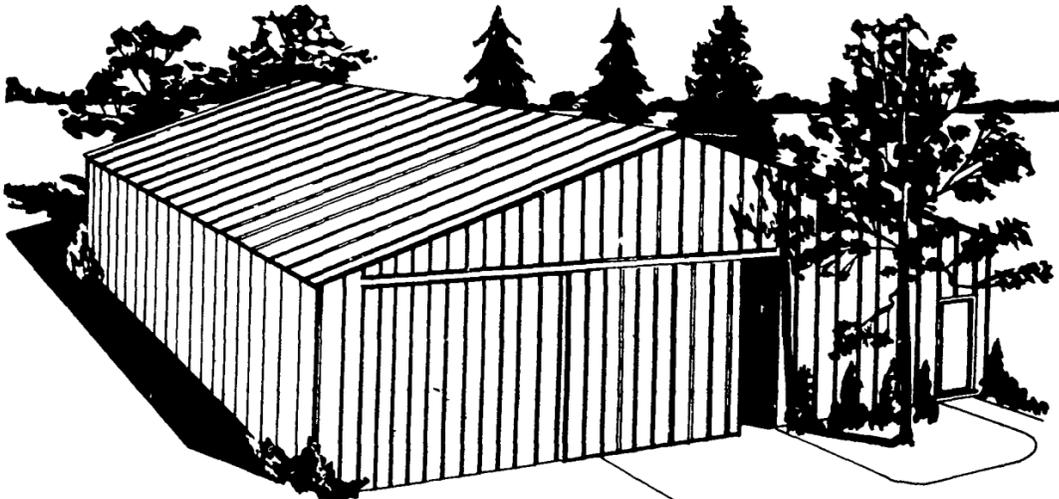
UNIVERSITY PARK — Dates for the 1980 Wool Pool schedule have been announced for Pennsylvania. The county schedule of dates includes:
Northumberland, May 29;
Northampton, June 2;

Bucks, June 3; Lawrence, June 3 and 4; Berks, June 4.
Venango, June 9; Mercer, June 9; Centre, June 9 and 10; Somerset, June 10; Tioga, June 12 and 13.
Wayne, June 17; Wyoming, June 17; Crawford, June 17; Sullivan, the morning of June 17; Bradford, the afternoon of June 17 and June 18.
Susquehanna, June 18; Indiana, June 18 and 19; Franklin and Cumberland, June 18 and 19; and Washington, June 24 and 25.



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