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The Milk Check

TOM JURCHAK
County Agent



Big Deal

One of the biggest deals ever attempted, to put under a single control the assembly and processing of milk, was undertaken early in March with the announcement that H.P. Hood, Agway and Yankee Milk were considering a joint venture that could involve our four billion pounds of milk a year or about 80 per cent of the supply in the New England market.

Nothing has happened yet, but a study was made and an agreement signed that allowed for a 90 day period for all the interested parties to put it all together.

It would require the purchase by Agway, Yankee Milk, the present 800 H.P. Hood shippers and perhaps two or three other co-ops to buy up sixty per cent of Hood's outstanding common stock at \$43 a share.

The Boards of Directors of

Agway and Hood have approved the agreement in principle. It would mean that Hood would purchase milk from a new cooperative made up of Yankee members, present Hood shippers and members of other cooperatives in New England.

Agway would not be involved directly in the handling of milk but their role is described as a catalyst limited to financial investment in H.P. Hood and overall leadership similar to the Pro Fac/Curtice-Burns model.

The new cooperative would purchase the fixed assets of Hood and the other cooperatives and lease them back to Hood.

It is expected that through lowered assembly costs, increased plant efficiencies and general market systems improvement that nearly five million dollars could be

saved for profit sharing among the participants.

There's a lot of work to do in 90 days, including a 94 cent per hundred capital investment by all the farmers who want to participate. They have to sign up enough farmers to get at least three billion pounds and that alone may take 90 days.

There are many pieces to fit together in a short time but just the idea that it is being tried is a little staggering.

Off and Running

The draft of a bill called the "Milk Producers" and Cooperative Security Fund Act" has been made by the Senate Agriculture Committee in the Pennsylvania Legislature.

From the title you can guess that it provides separate funds for proprietary handlers and cooperatives.

The "marketing" co-ops

must participate in the fund unless "opted out" by their board of directors or their voting delegates at the annual meeting.

Handlers will contribute one cent a hundred, and claims by producers will cover 75 percent of the amount owed by the handler for a period of up to 60 days. This percentage could be increased after a public hearing if the fund has "sufficient assets."

Under the Cooperative Security Fund the co-op would have to go bankrupt before the members would receive "an amount not to exceed 90 percent of the unpaid milk money of the member."

Of course, this is just the beginning of what may be included in a bill that may get passed. But it's further along than such an effort has ever been before so at least you're off and running.

Central York Dairy 4-H builds show boxes

The Central York 4-H Dairy Club held their March meeting at the home of Roy Thompson.

The club started work on their spring project, the

making of a show box to keep equipment in at the barn.

The next meeting will be held April 14 at the Thompson farm to complete the projects.

MF
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MF 640 Row Crop Planter



Massey-Ferguson's new 640 row crop planter uses air pressure to gently single out each seed

Seed selection discs provide extremely accurate plant populations in all kinds of soils, even with minimum tillage. A seed drop of only 9" (229 mm) adds to

planting accuracy by reducing bounce for uniform spacing in the row

Optional depth gauge wheels put every seed at the same depth for a uniform stand from one end of the field to the other. Double disc openers help stop plugging

to keep you on-the-move

Seed hoppers are 1 1/4 bushels translucent fiberglass for less refills and easy visibility of seed levels from the tractor seat

All of these features provide the new MF 640 with excellent planting efficiency at optimum

speeds so you get more seed in the ground per hour

Other features include a standard seed monitor, high-strength hydraulic markers and rugged roller chain drives

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Ph (717) 648-1120

ABRACZINSKA'S FARM EQUIP. INC.
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