

Dairy committee supports HB1287, talks product promotion

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania State Grange Dairy Committee Wednesday reaffirmed its support of the proposed milk security fund.

"The Grange is a strong supporter of HB 1287 and hopes to see it passed as soon as possible," said State Grange Master Charles E. Wismer, Jr.

The committee expressed hope the bill could be through both houses of the state legislature and on the Governor's desk by June, the traditional dairy month.

While milk security was the top item on the committee's agenda, dairy promotion was number two, and occupied most of the time spent at the Harrisburg meeting.

The sentiment of the committee was strongly in support of milk promotion. But questions were raised about methods of promotion, legality of certain promotion methods, and what areas to promote.

Current Pennsylvania law does not allow producers to ask out of any promotion program. The law requires such programs be mandatory.

In addition, the current law does not allow producers to promote specific brand names. All check-off funds must be spent to promote the product in general, not a specific brand.

One reason why the Grangers are eager to see the milk security fund acted upon is that it will bring the subject of milk promotion to the forefront in both the Department of Agriculture and on Capitol Hill.

What members of the committee also noted was any change in the dairy promotion funding also will necessitate changes in other product promotion campaigns including potatoes, cherries, and apples, as well as milk.

Of course, a change in the law is not out of the question.

One organization which currently is using producer funds to support brand advertising is Lehigh Valley



Members of the State Grange Dairy Committee meeting Wednesday in Harrisburg included, from left, Feryl Treichler, Berks County, Dairy Committee Chairman; Harold Ely, Susquehanna County; Horace Prange, Chester County; Max

Dewing, Bradford County; Fenton Murphy, NEDCO; Milford Kinsman, Bradford County; James Sherman, Erie County; and State Master Charles E. Wismer, Jr.

Farms. On hand to explain the system was Lehigh Valley Director of Marketing Vernon H. Hydorn.

Lehigh has asked its Federal Order 4 producers to divert their seven cents contribution to their own advertising program rather than have the money go to the American Dairy Association's general dairy ads.

Hydorn showed the Grangers the advertisements and played the radio spots which Lehigh is using. The program basically was the one shown at Lehigh producer meetings.

The question of brand advertising versus general product advertising is likely to be contested within the Grange. Tioga Grange, Bradford County, said it was

against brand advertising, but for ADA's program.

The Bradford Pomona Grange adopted the resolution, too.

A statewide dairy promotion program generally is favored by the organizations the Grangers surveyed. NEDCO, Milk Marketing Inc., Inter-State, Dairy Lea, Lehigh, Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, the Grange and

some other farm groups support the idea.

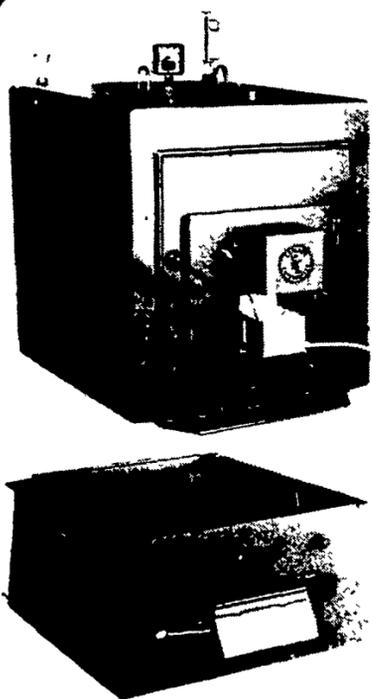
Eastern Co-op said it opposes the statewide dairy promotion package although it would support a positive letter with a voluntary ask-out.

Grange members also heard the question of hearings on the Community Nutrition Program on reconstituted milk should be

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