

# Letters To The Editor

Dear editor:

Unfortunately for all Pennsylvania farmers and for "Lancaster Farming" in particular Editor Curt Harler, has demonstrated a gross lack of understanding of co-ops in his editorial, "Independent dairymen need a voice", in the June 21 issue.

He is talking out of both sides of his mouth when on one hand he seems to sympathize with the unfortunate plight of the dairyman who does not belong to a co-op and on the other hand is recommending that they join together to form an organization (co-op) to speak for them. His shallow understanding is illustrated by the three issues he raises.

First SB 1287, the non-co-op farmer has to "live with the law". He can count his blessings. It will benefit him as much or more than anyone - thanks to the co-ops and others who worked for it.

Second is the truck bill. Are his interests any different than that of any other Pennsylvania dairyman?

Third - the "rough" handling by a co-op who notified a group of producers that they must join if their milk is to be marketed by them. Mr Harler thinks that is opportunistic? It is only fair for them to belong in return for services provided by the co-op.

If they left earlier, it was probably because they did not want to pay their fair share of the cost of marketing their milk. After making that decision, anything they get or do not get, they deserve.

He then speaks of milk processors and dairy co-ops as if they are one. He speaks of co-ops as "they". Come now, co-ops are "we", Pennsylvania, Maryland and other dairy farmers who have already done what you are recommending the others to do and that is banding together to do what none of us can do as individuals, and that's the only sensible thing the editorial says.

But why organize another group to do what is already being done by existing co-ops?

There are several successful co-ops with Pennsylvania members where most any farmer can find marketing services and an able spokesman for problems.

Those not belonging to co-ops would do well to consider what more could be done if they joined with their co-op neighbors and helped with their support, both morally and financially.

I don't think any farmer really intends to free-load off his neighbor and if he has the correct information, he would not. Lancaster Farming can help.

Herbert W. Wessel, Jr.  
President  
Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers, Inc.

Dear Editor

Your editorial in the June 21 issue was one of the finest testimonials to the need for cooperatives that I have read in some time.

To quote from your last paragraph, "The independents would be well advised to consider banding

together. Such ties may, in the long run, assure their independence." May I substitute the word "survival" for the word "independence"?

Again to quote you, "There was no single organization to go knocking on doors." This is exactly why, some 60 years ago, dairy farmers founded the Inter-State Milk Producers' Cooperative and other cooperatives. Inter-State's three thousand members have banded together for the very reasons you stress in your editorial - to work for their interests, and to do those things they cannot do as individuals.

This is the reason for the existence of cooperatives. The members, in turn, must see that the cooperative meets their objectives.

Thank you for your timely editorial. But, you raise a question: Do we need another cooperative, which you really suggest, or, do we need more effective cooperatives, with stronger support from dairy farmers?

A cooperative is as effective as the members, through their Board of Directors, are determined to make it.

Lester C. Jones, President  
Inter-State Milk Producers Cooperative

Dear editor:

To say I was disgusted with Pete Hardin's advertisement in the June 28 issue of Lancaster Farming is putting it mildly.

To such members of Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative that do not take the time and effort to read the Eastern magazine and also the newsletters sent from the main office from time to time, it would seem as if Eastern is operating by some big, dark secrets that only Pete Hardin "happened" to reveal.

I don't think Pete Hardin's "guts" is revealing any more secrets to us than what we have heard at Eastern meetings we have attended or have been told by news letters we received.

I have a copy of a letter dated May 6, 1980 from the

Secretary of Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative, telling us all about what he claims the May "Milkweed" revealed.

Also concerning the wages "Mrs. Tewksbury the presidents wife, received each week" - before you jump to conclusions that it was out of line, be sure you know the facts and then compare it with what any other secretary would have been paid for doing the book work or secretarial work of a nearby milk plant.

The part about the clauses in the Leprino contract, if the Co-op is unable to supply the contracted amount of milk - as far as I am concerned, I knew that long before the May Milkweed was ever printed - more like about the time May 1978 issue would have been printed if Milkweed was around at that time. That clause was by far no secret. We heard that at the first meeting the Leprino contract was discussed.

I am wondering if Pete Hardin might have a personal grudge against Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative - like maybe he might have been formerly employed by Eastern and is out for some kind of revenge?

If I remember correctly Pete Hardin also attacked Eastern through articles in the Farm Journal.

It seems to me some

people are trying hard to tear Eastern apart and would enjoy seeing it fail, but if they succeed what would anyone benefit by it?

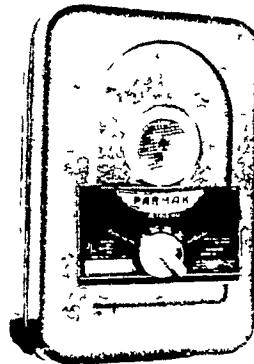
I am not happy either about these costly assessments, neither is any other member and I feel certain the officials of Eastern at Syracuse are not happy about it either. But maybe if Pennsylvania had a milk security fund it would be different, and who worked harder & longer to try and convince the officials at Harrisburg we need a milk security fund?

I think if other co-ops would have worked with Eastern, instead of dragging their feet as long as they did, we would have had a security fund sooner.

M. Martin  
R2 Annville



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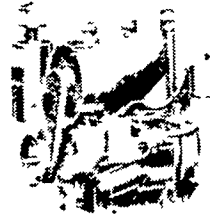
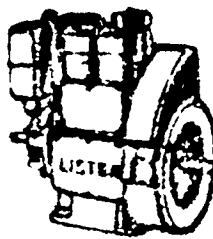
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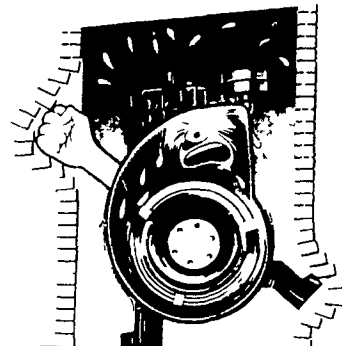


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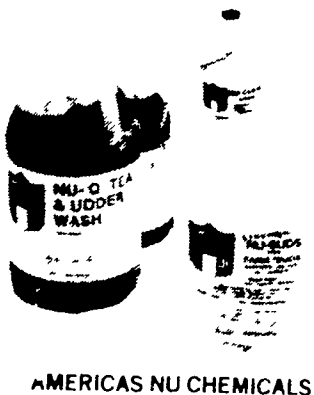
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