

State Grange sets policy for 1981

LEWISTOWN — Many items of legislative, dairy, and general agricultural interest were approved by State Grangers at their annual meeting.

At the Lewistown sessions Grangers acted on the largest number of resolutions in recent memory.

In determining the percent of parity used for support price determination the State Grange requested that imported dairy products be excluded from the computations.

On the subject of a milk promotion referendum, Grangers said the rate of assessment must be not less than one-half percent or more than one percent of the weighted average blend prices by all orders involved.

The administrative and operating budgets must not exceed five percent of the funds collected, and the advisory board must not include more than 25 producer members, limited to two full, consecutive, three-year-terms, Grangers said.

Casein imports must be rigidly controlled by the ITC, they said.

The following resolution was accompanied by a blast at the increasing brucellosis incidence of Brucellosis in this state.

Any cattle dealer being convicted of ear tag or health chart manipulation, must lose his license permanently, they said.

A minimum fine of \$10,000 for each offense should be imposed, upon conviction.

Further, all brucellosis-infected, or reactor cattle being sold at a livestock auction, for beef or beef purposes, should be freeze-branded with the letter "B"

An endorsement should be required of each herd or handler the animals was with while the health chart was valid.

A minimum of \$2500 fine should be levied against any licensed cattle dealer implicated with a suspended dealer.

A mailed-out release should be sent to all certified veterinarians in the state or specified area, depending on the outbreak or intensity of the disease, they said.

The Grange also endorsed 80 percent of parity of support prices, and that it be readjusted in April and October to reflect changes in the cost of production.

On anti-biotic tolerances, the Grange recommends it be established to allow 0.03 ppm of antibiotic residue in milk, meat, and other foodstuffs.

Since dairy farmers in Northeastern Pennsylvania who ship milk to Federal Order 2 are losing five cents per hundredweight by not being regulated, and since milk dealers in Northeastern Pennsylvania only pay a

small percentage for the milk produced the first 15 days of the preceding month, the Grange is calling for the U.S. Agriculture Secretary to call for a hearing in Federal Order 2 to have it extended into Northeast and North Central Pennsylvania.

Further, they are calling for milk dealers in Pennsylvania to pay 80 percent or more if the first fifteen days of the preceding month in a milk check on the first to the fifth of the month, and the balance of the milk check on the 20th of the month.

Contained within the policy statement of the legislative committee, is a recommendation opposing any tariff legislation or Public Utilities Commission regulations allowing utilities to establish insulation standards. The reasoning behind this is because they establish these standards before they connect power.

"While proper for homes with electric heat, it is not proper for all homes," they said.

Another resolution adopted in the policy statement opposes setting up another land grant institution within Pennsylvania. There was legislation introduced this year attempting to name Lincoln University a land grant college.

It was felt that since the state already appropriates more money than any other state does to its higher learning institutions, but ranks near the bottom in per capita support, this action would be inappropriate.

Another area is the Harness Racing Fund. Since the formation of the Fund, the total amount of available money has never been increased beyond \$400,000. One area extra money should be appropriated for is the study of electric ground fault, as recommended by the State Grange Energy Advisory Committee.

Stray voltage is becoming a problem affecting growth and production of livestock. Extension engineers have been spending more and more time with this problem. For this reason, the Grange will be recommending money be appropriated from ag research fund monies for the study of this problem.

The committee also called for Pennsylvania to work to assume primacy under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Another recommendation calls for the state to enter into either loan or grant programs to enable small water companies to update their filtration and distribution systems. Many of these companies are, according to DER, having their dams condemned by the Army Corps of Engineers because they are unsafe. These grants or loans should be used toward fixing those facilities as well.

In light of the drought Eastern Pennsylvania suffered, the State Grange is recommending that an emergency water plan be drafted, taking into consideration the vital needs of all agricultural, poultry, and animals operations.

Also on the topic of water, the Committee called for Congress to have more appropriations to construct water storages and control facilities in the entire northeast.

Due to the conditions of the state's highways and bridges, and the weight restrictions on the same, the State Grange has endorsed a gasoline tax.

Monies from this tax should be targeted for bridge and road rehabilitation they said.

They said the tax should be done on a percentage basis; an immediate percent increase equal to two cents per gallon, and a maximum of two cents per gallon increase per year; any change in the taxation will include a farm use exemption; the tax should be collected at the distributor level; the existing collection system for farm use continue; the Federal tax should be changed to a percentage basis, and the additional monies be used for road and bridge rehabilitation.

Under the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act, reclamation fees collected on a 35 cent per ton basis are placed into a abandoned mine reclamation fund. Approximately \$500 million is now in this fund. Only \$10.1 million has been appropriated by Congress to get reclamation started. The Grange, both at the State

and the National level, will work to see this money released, so reclamation can begin.

Since 14'6" wide farm equipment cannot be moved on freeways, the Grange recommends this restriction be reduced so they are only restricted from Interstates.

Owing to some of the processing and cannery bankruptcies occurring around the state, as well as the bankruptcies of feed mills leaving the producer holding the bag, the Grange is recommending all segments of agriculture be protected by establishing a guarantee of payments through either bonding or letters of credit.

On the mushroom import problem, the Grange will seek a permanent solution. Legislation seeking mandate quotas, tariffs, and ad

valorem taxes are necessary. Further, any monies collected through the tariffs should be recycled back to the industry for research and promotion.

Other related legislation the Grange seeks calls for labeling requirement on imported products that list ingredients, as is required in this country.

On ag preservation the Grange stipulated it would only support programs which are voluntary. Pilot programs, such as the deed restriction plan in Lancaster County, should be encouraged if local funding is provided.

Since the Federal ASCS funding program has not been increased, the State Grange Agriculture Committee has called for a state sharing plan (i.e., terracing is now 75 percent Federal, 25

percent Individual; proposed: 75 percent Federal, 10 percent state, 15 individual).

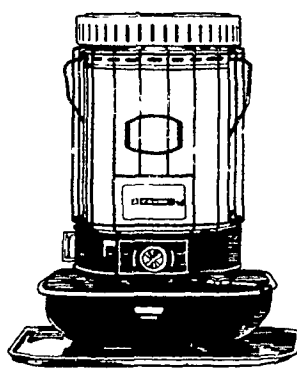
The Farmers Home Administration has been unresponsive to farmers, Grangers said. Therefore, the Grange is calling for a separate bureau within FmHA to oversee its ag loans, with personnel with ag experience and training.

On ag research, the Grange is calling for direct appropriations to the University of Pennsylvania's New Bolton Center for both research and education. Funding is now available only for education.

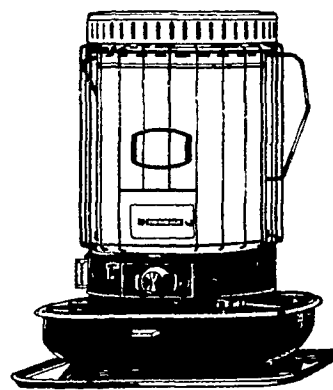
Several resolutions were passed calling for ASCS to re-instate a cost-sharing program on multiflora rose eradication.

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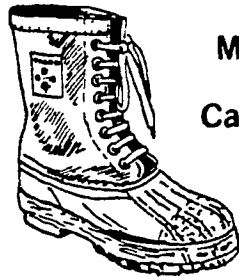
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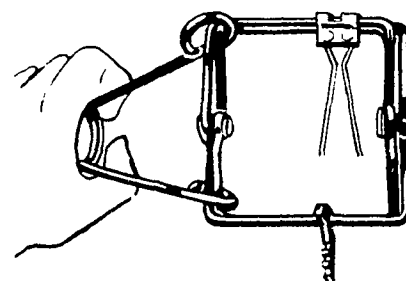


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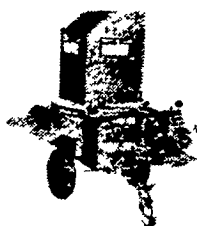
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