

*Exclusive interview with NFU president*

# Stone offers his views on current farm issues



George W. Stone, president of National Farmers Union, said he feels dairymen will be lucky to keep 80 percent of parity. But he still backs the idea of 100 percent parity for all crops.

**BY CURT HARLER**  
 GRANVILLE — George W. Stone, president of the National Farmers Union, comes across as a man who knows what he's after but who is willing to take half a loaf now in hopes of getting the rest later.

Stone, who is serving his first year as president of NFU, was in Pennsylvania this week to address the ninth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Farmers Union.

The question of dairy parity was one of the first discussed in his exclusive interview with Lancaster Farming. NFU long has been on record as supporting 100 percent of parity for all farm crops.

The 100 percent idea is fine, but right now we aim to get as high as we can, Stone said explaining why NFU is on record as supporting 80 percent of parity for dairy farmers.

At 80 percent of parity the established farmer will be able to make it OK, Stone said.

We will be fortunate to

keep dairy parity where it is, he said.

But, he continued, for a farmer to get proper return on investment farm product prices must reach 100 percent of parity.

Of course, 100 percent of parity for grain prices will mean hog and cattle farmers will have to pay more for their basic input feed.

The price all farmers get has to be realistic. The farmer will get better prices and the consumer will be better off once the ups and downs caused by the current pricing method are leveled out, Stone said.

All segments are entitled to a profit. If the price has to go up, it has to go up.

Noted as an outspoken champion of the family farm, Stone made his mark in the battle against having family farms engulfed by corporations or foreign investors during his five-year stint as vice president of NFU.

A native of Oklahoma, where he served as president of the 90,000 member Oklahoma Farmers Union for almost 20 years starting

in 1956, Stone said he feels his home state has some of the answers other states seek in the land ownership question.

You won't stop development, he said, but you can stop foreigners from buying the land.

Since it became a state, Oklahoma's constitution has forbidden any alien from

ownership of land within the state, he said. The solution was so simple he can't seem to figure why other states haven't adopted it.

Then, about 10 years ago, the state passed a law forbidding ownership of farmland by any corporation except closely held farm

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