The Milk Check

TOM JURCHAK County Agent



More Surprises

When Secretary of Agriculture Block appeared before the Senate Agriculture Committee at the end of March and asked for legislation allowing him to determine the dairy price suport between 70 and 90 percent of parity, it was a big surprise to the general farm organizations as well as the dairy cooperatives.

They were expecting a support price between 75 and 90 percent with a bracketing arrangement that determined the exact level according to how much milk equivalent was purchased by the Commodity Credit Corporation as butter, powder or cheese.

Block went back to the White House and wrote the administration's new farm bill this month, he said ... "the Secretary is authorized to support the price of milk at less than 70 percent of parity if the Secretary determines that the Commodity Credit Cor-

poration is accumulating, or has accumulated, excessive quantities of milk or milk products." He also said the support price set for the beginning of the new marketing year starting October 1, 1981 would not be less than the present support price of \$12 80 set last October.

National Milk Producers Federaion calculates that, by October, \$12.80 will be only 70 percent of parity. By October, 1982 it will be down to 60 percent - if they stick with it. However, NMPF says the administration proposal really gives the Secretary a choice between zero and 90 percent of parity after 1981 whenever he feels that CCC has accumulated "excessive" quantities of milk products.

Easter Recess

All of this happened before Congress adjourned for a two week Easter recess on April 9. It was introduced as Senate Bill 943 by

Senator Helms and titled the Agricultural Act of 1981.

A companion bill is expected to be introduced in the House and the agriculture committees of both the House and the Senate will start working on the bill when they return on April 27.

We can only speculate on the reasons for this second surprise in the administration's demands on the dairy industry. It could be that they misinterpreted a lack of opposition to the removal of the April 1 adjustment as a willingness of dairy producers to settle for whatever the administration of-

Or, it could be a grand stand play to show that the administration is really trying to help consumers cut food costs.

Or it could be — as we've said before — that reducing expenditures on the dairy price support program to levels projected by the administration three months ago will take deeper cuts than they expected.

However, if this is an effort by the administration to test the backbone of agriculture and the dairy industry, they may have gone too far. Almost as soon as the news hit the street, there was a reaction from farm groups, they would only try that much harder to get what they originally went after

Vaccinate horses now against encephalomyelitis

WILMINGTON, Del. — Mosquito breeding season is a good time to remind horse owners about vaccinating their horses against equine encephalomyelitis, says a University of Delaware extension equine specialist.

According to Dr. C. Melvin Reitnour, many needless deaths occur among horses because they were not vaccinated against this "sleeping sickness" disease, which is spread by biting insects, especially mosquitoes.

A three-component vaccine protects horses from three strains of the disease: eastern (EEE), western (WEE), and Venezuelan (VEE) equine encephalomyelitis, says Reitnour.

Sleeping sickness in horses is a virus disease whose symptoms are depression, high fever, in-coordination, and a reeling gait. The horse may also experience loss of vision, drowsiness and an mability to swallow. Paralysis and

now that they knew more clearly what the administration really had in mind all the time.

death usually follow within two or three days.

Reitnour says the mortality rate for horses and ponies afflicted with the disease is approximately 90 percent. Those few animals which do survive often suffer permanent brain damage.

Horses should be given annual vaccinations to protect them, reminds the specialist. With the trivalent vaccine available, immunity can be provided against all three strains of the virus. The vaccine uses only killed viruses. This means fewer restrictions are needed than were previously when VEE could be protected against only by a modified live virus (MLV) vaccine.

The vaccine must be administered by deep intramuscular injection of two doses 21 to 28 days apart, both for initial vaccination and for annual revaccination.

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In 100 million years an Earth day will be almost half an hour longer than it is now, the National Geographic Society says. As Earth rotates beneath its tidal bulges, friction slows it down by a fraction of a second each century.

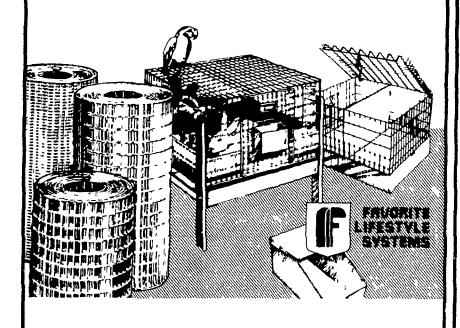
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