

# HB 767

(Continued from Page A1)

referendum on the program to determine whether or not it should be continued.

Of these changes, the one causing most of the commotion is the elimination of block voting by a cooperative — presently a co-op can vote for its members if individual farmers choose not to cast their ballots. Testifying against HB 767 were representatives of the major milk cooperatives, including Milk Marketing, Inc., Inter-State, Lehigh Valley, and NEDCO. The other cooperative coming out in opposition of HB 767 is the Pa. Cooperative Potato Growers, Inc.

Also testifying against HB 767 was Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Luther Snyder, representing the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. He

stated the Department's feelings and said "the present procedure is adequate to carry out a marketing program." The present law allows block voting and requires a majority of the individuals voting and 50 percent of the volume for passage.

Snyder remarked that changing the length of time from five to three years would increase costs of a marketing program for the farmer — the present system allows the Secretary of Agriculture to see whether a marketing program is effective during the period of appointment.

The Pennsylvania Farmers' Association and the State Grange also went on record opposing HB 767, stating they were satisfied with the present system.

When questioned about why non-co-op farmers don't vote on referendums, Mervyn Myers, a dairyman representing PFA,

stated "apathy." He added that having concise information presented to the farmer concerning the referendum might help "if they (farmers) bother to read the information provided, and if they don't throw it in the waste can."

Although not presently affected by a state marketing program, the subject of the milk referendum kept raising its head during the hearing. Previously, two milk referendums have been voted down by the state's dairy producers (of whom 80 percent are represented by milk cooperatives, it was said) even though block voting was in effect during the balloting.

Support for HB 767 came from the Pennsylvania Farmers' Union, former Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Kent Shelhamer, and a Franklin County dairy farmer, Barbara Woods.

PFU's Carl Kaufman remarked that the block voting system is "one step removed from dictatorship." He commented PFU is for preserving the family farm and the American way — one person, one vote. He referred to results of the 1973 milk referendum which showed that cooperative's block votes were cast exactly opposite those individually cast by dairy farmers.

Shelhamer echoed Kaufman's sentiments saying, "I don't believe if Pennsylvania farmers understood block voting that it would be the policy of PFA or the Grange to support it."

Others who sent letters to Chairman Grieco's office in support of HB 767 included: Robert Hoyer, Easton; Valley Haven Farms, Howard Pyscher and Sons, Bangor; Margaret Edwards,

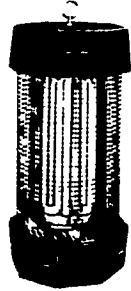
Oxford; Lester Loch, Kempton; Karen Watson, Columbia Cross Roads; Fred Baker, Meshoppen; Beverly Watson, Columbia Cross Roads; Connie Teel, Meshoppen; Kenneth Arthur, Hughesville; Rev. Sam Reed, Avis; Hanna Fenstermacher, Lairdsville; Verus Shaner, Hughesville; Kenneth Miller, Bangor; and Jack Philson, chairman, Pa. Farmers Union.

Testimonies for and against HB 767 begin on page A20.



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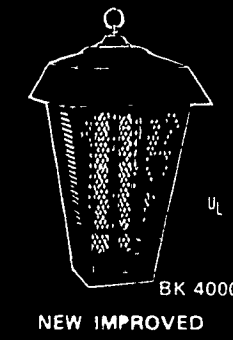
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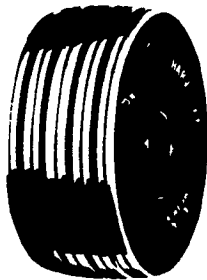


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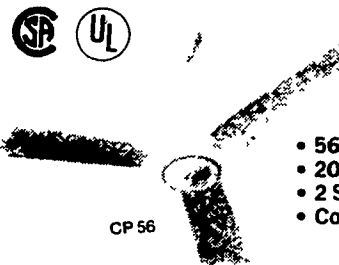
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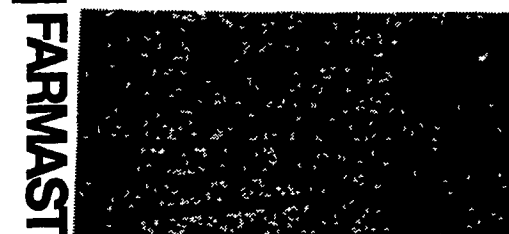
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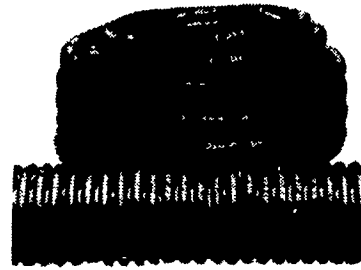


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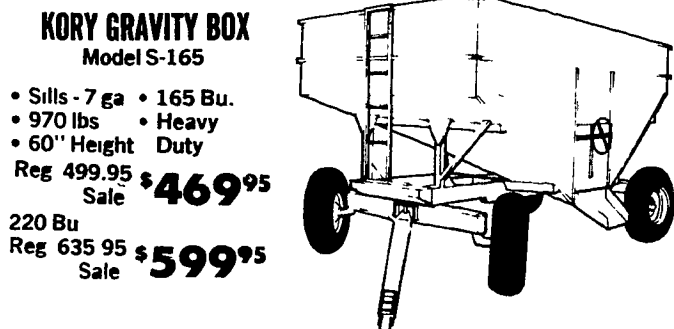


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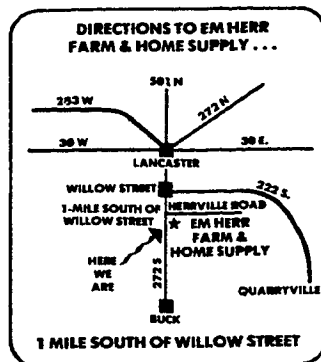
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