

'Block Vote' Bill

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majority for passage could insure rule by a minority.

The three existing boards under this act, the Apple Marketing Board, the Red Cherry Marketing Board, and the Potato Research Board, are all opposed to a provision which would change the formula to require a two-thirds majority for passage.

The current act also provides for termination or suspension of marketing programs under the act when requested in writing by one-third of affected producers who market more than fifty percent of the volume of commodities produced under the program.

Amendments in HB 767 would eliminate this provision, which is, effectively a means of review. This language was put into the act to allow suspension of a marketing program under extreme circumstances, and has the same effect as a review referendum.

Under the current act, the Secretary of Agriculture must call a review referendum of affected producers every five years, to determine whether or not the marketing program will continue. The amendments to the act included in HB 767 would change the five-year review period to a three-year period.

The Apple and Red Cherry

Marketing Boards and the Potato Research Board are in opposition to this proposed amendment, in light of the additional costs of holding the review referendums. Existing language in section seven concerning suspension or termination of a program would cover the contingency that a program would lose the support of its affected producers within the five-year period prior to a review referendum.

The Department of Agriculture is satisfied with the programs now supported by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act of 1968, and is convinced that the existing law is working satisfactorily. We respectfully recommend that the existing law continue to function as is.

Remaining testimonies will be published in next week's issue. All reader's opinions are welcomed and will be printed if signed.

Pa. Potato Growers

On July 22, 1981, the Board of Directors of Pennsylvania Co-operative Potato Growers, Inc. voted unanimously to oppose any change to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act of 1968.

The Pennsylvania Co-operative Potato Growers represents the majority of the potato growers in our state and is the only state organization representing the potato grower. The Pennsylvania Co-operative Potato Growers is opposed to House Bill 767 and the amendments it proposes.

We support the concept of modified bloc voting by co-operatives. We believe that removing this provision would make passage of referendums for the purpose of sales promotion, research and service programs unnecessarily difficult.

Howard L. Featherman,
General Manager



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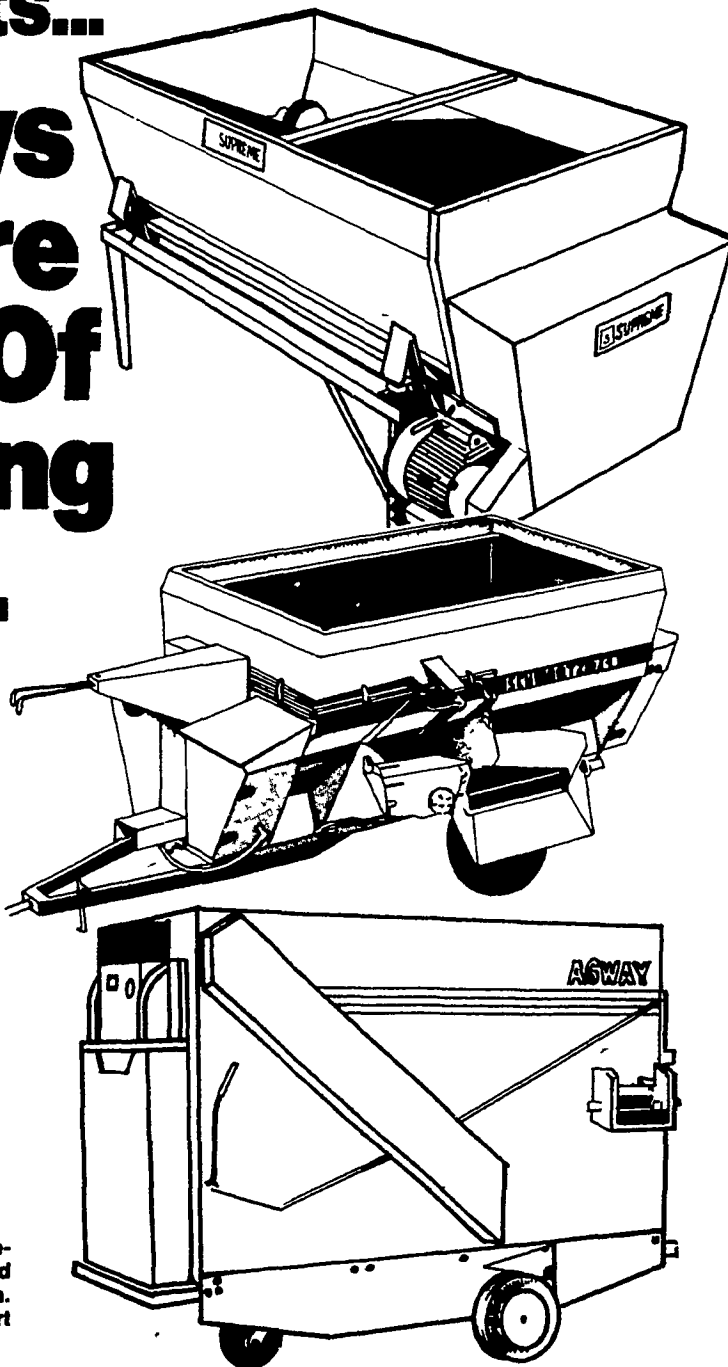
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