

# Farmers should 'sing out of same hymnal'

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KANSAS CITY — Farmers must do a better job of education and communication, learn to speak with one unified voice and be more

effective in partisanship politics if they are to succeed in the challenges they face, according to John Carlin, governor of the state of Kansas.

Carlin, a well-known Holstein

breeder from that state, spoke to the National Association of Animal Breeders at their annual convention in Kansas City, and offered his views on challenges from a political perspective.

An article spokesman, as well as a knowledgeable dairyman, Carlin spoke plainly about the need for farmers to get involved politically.

He said, "We have not done very

well in the political arena. We don't understand it. But the time is past when we could get along without it - we will have to make adjustments."

He acknowledged that without the strong record of agriculture in the past, the national economy would be in "further disarray." But he added, "Fewer and fewer farmers means fewer and fewer votes. We must be more politically adept at what we're doing."

In the political arena, Carlin said, "We need to support those who are with us. We must all do our best within the political framework our system provides."

Farmers may be proud of their independence, but Carlin pointed out, "In the political world our independence is killing us. No other segment in the country speaks with so many voices. We aren't singing out of the same hymnal. Until we do something about it we'll continue to fail, and continue not to be heard."

He added, "We don't have the luxury of being independent. We've got to work together."

Carlin said farmers must work in the area of education, and not just to educate others. "There are those in agriculture who need to better understand what's going on. We need to be on top of things in terms of management and take advantage of the latest technology."

There is a real need to communicate with those outside agriculture, and explain the importance of exports and research. "We need to educate the public on the value of exports and show the consumers the benefits from exports." Carlin called exports "a great opportunity for farmers. If it is to help the farmers a lot of people have to understand."

Carlin stated, "We have to take our technology overseas. It is a short-sided assumption to ask 'Why share what we know?' If we share and assist developing nations in developing their economy they'll be able to afford to purchase more."

He told farmers they must take the issue of animal rights seriously. "If we don't educate ourselves and communicate that education to others we'll find ourselves with legislation that will greatly alter what we know. It will require our full understanding and then we must take action."

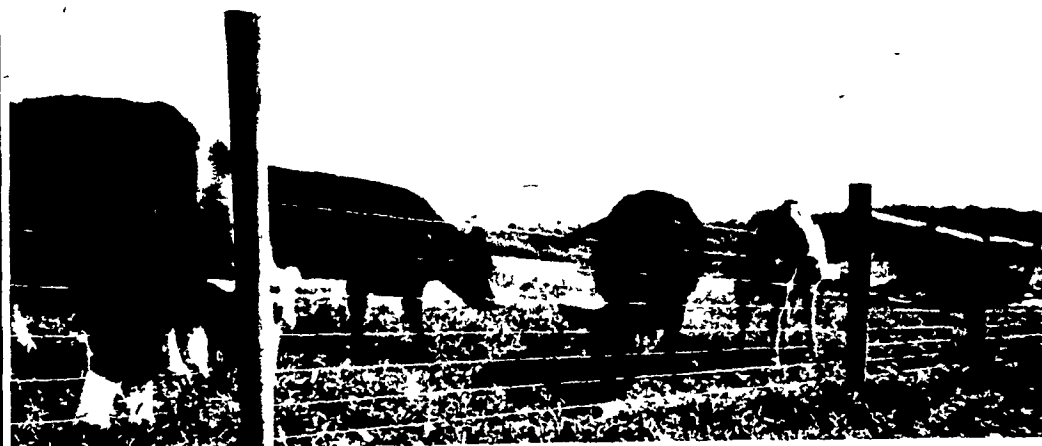
Research should also not be taken for granted, according to Carlin. With further budget cuts, he said, "They'll be looking for programs." He pointed out that the research done today is necessary five or ten years in the future.

Carlin noted, "Things won't happen just because we're right. We must practice and believe in education and communication."

Carlin graduated from Kansas State University where he was a member of the dairy judging team. A democrat, he served in the legislature and was elected to the position of minority leader in the senate before successfully running for the office of governor.

He is an active partner in Carlin Holsteins and has a beef operation as well.

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