

Nat'l Grange Master calls for higher support level

BY SHEILA MILLER

LANCASTER — Last weekend, during a special six-state workshop involving representatives of the Grange, National Grange Master Edward Anderson spent a busy two days in Lancaster County.

As the session participants took a short break, Anderson spoke to Lancaster Farming about current issues in the agricultural world, as they affect the Grange and farmers across the nation.

First on the list of important topics was the 1981 Farm Bill. Anderson, who began his farming career as a Nebraska dairyman, expressed the Grange's "disappointment in the total Farm Bill. "We asked the House to vote it down," he said. "It's below the price support value and is worthless to farmers as written."

Addressing the controversial dairy provisions, Anderson conceded that there are serious problems in the dairy industry. "We need to get production more in line with demand," he remarked. "But cutting price is not the way to go."

"The dairy cows are out there, and there are lots of replacement heifers waiting to take their place in the milking string. It will take a period of years to turn the production cycle around. But the administration is determined to shut production down now."

Rather than cutting price supports, Anderson recommended spending more money to develop markets overseas. Concerning one international butter sales agreement involving the small island-country of New Zealand, Anderson said the Grange was in full support of this eyebrow-raising deal.

"There are many who opposed this sale of butter to New Zealand because the U.S. agreed not to sell butter to anyone else on the open market for 10 months. What these people don't realize is that we sold more butter to New Zealand in July than we normally sell on the open market for an entire year," he pointed out.

The National Grange Master explained that private industries can still peddle their dairy products in the world market,



Master Edward Anderson

however the New Zealand agreement prevents the Commodity Credit Corporation from selling, at the present time. "The only way CCC can export dairy products is through PL 480 programs and other 'giveaway' programs. But that restrictive time period of 10 months will expire fast."

In summing up the problem facing the dairy industry, Anderson stated, "The Grange only sees increased per capita consumption of milk as the long-range answer. And, increased export promotion would help balance the supply-demand situation."

Anderson, who joined the Grange in 1950, has held numerous local, county and state offices. He was elected State Master in 1970 and Overseer (vice president) of the National Grange in 1971. Then in November 1979 Anderson became the first National Master ever elected to the top Grange office from the Overseer's chair.

While serving as a member of the National Grange Executive Committee, Anderson was called on to represent the Grange on the Beef Development Task Force and served on both Beeferendum committees — in 1976 and then again in 1980. Commenting on the failure of these two national efforts to create a promotion checkoff for the cattle industry, Anderson predicted there would never be another beef referendum because the industry would never consider one. "Today, the beef industry is

committed to working to develop a voluntary beef checkoff on a nationwide basis."

The Nebraska farmer stressed that one of the serious problems in the beef industry is merchandising. "Cattlemen haven't changed their merchandising and they haven't changed their product to keep pace with consumer demands. We still see too many fat animals; we need to change to what the public wants — lean meat."

"Look what happened in the hog industry. The hog of 25 years ago looks nothing like the modern hog, longer and leaner."

Anderson expressed his concern for a nationwide promotion effort in the beef industry. He cited the fact that, during the past three years, beef consumption has lagged. "Once the price of beef gets to a certain level, consumers back away from it and turn to cheaper meat, like poultry and pork which is available in large supplies. In a weak economy, like we have today, the first things consumers cut back on are red meats and dairy products."

As a native of the grain-rich Midwest, Anderson touched on the problems facing the feed grain farmers. "The Administration's export program is the only one available to help the grain industry. It's a great opportunity that is limited to a certain extent due to the effects of the recent embargo."

"The effects of this action imposed by the previous administration will be felt for many years," he noted. "The Russians have found markets in other countries to make up for the cutoff-supplies of U.S. grains. Now we can only sell them what amounts they can't buy from other suppliers. It'll be a long time before our grain industry will recover from the embargo."

Anderson expressed some assurance that the current administration in Washington, D.C. will not create another stumbling block in grain exports. "This administration is more reluctant to impose another embargo than most administrations would be," he said. "This one is committed to

freer trade with less government involvement."

Bringing the conversation full circle, Anderson stated that the export situation as it affects the overall farm economy is the reason why there needs to be a Farm Bill with higher support levels. "The total economy depends on our net farm economy. If that's down, then manufacturers aren't going to sell machinery, buildings, automobiles, or new homes. These industries are all a part of the total that will suffer with a weak farm economy."

"The Administration will be making a grave mistake if it doesn't give agriculture a larger share of the budget."

One of the areas where the federal government proposes cutting back is in soil conservation — eliminating 1,200 technician positions during the next fiscal year. This potential layoff of skilled conservationists who assist farmers in solving their erosion problems is wrong, said Anderson.

"Erosion is a serious problem that should be dealt with immediately. It is the responsibility of the federal government to put the needed emphasis on erosion and flood control. This would be in the best interest of all consumers who would be paying for this service through taxation."

Anderson stressed the need for more research into the proper methods to achieve adequate erosion and flood control on farmland. He stated that these conservation measures should be carried out under a long-term agreement with the cooperation of all levels of government.

Concerning proposed cross-compliance stipulations, the National Grange Master said his organization is opposed to any requirements for soil and water conservation that would exceed the present restrictions.

"The Farmers Home Administration has required for a number of years that farmers borrow enough money to install needed conservation at the same time they borrow money to buy the farms. This, we go along with. But we don't feel this should be extended to all loans, such as a farm operating loan where a farmer

might be borrowing money to plant crops on all rented land."

Addressing the trend to fewer and larger farms, Anderson commented that the rate of change from small to large has not been as rapid in recent years. He offered his solution to the problem, though — changing the tax laws.

"Certain Internal Revenue Service regulations actually encourage increasing farm size," he said. The tools of investment credit and capital gains are, for the most part, out of reach for the small family farms, he noted, because they are below the level of income needed to take advantage of these tax-saving measures.

One recent tax change that received the National Grange's complete endorsement involved inheritance taxes. "We supported the changes because they allowed for one spouse to pass the farm to the surviving spouse and raised the level of exemptions. They also changed the rules so that now the value of a farm is based on its agricultural use instead of its market price."

As a result of the new inheritance tax laws, Anderson stated, there will be a decrease in the number of farms on the market as years go by. And with fewer farms for sale, those that are sold will bring a higher price. "It used to be estates had to sell the farm in order to settle the inheritance taxes. This will no longer necessarily be the case."

Other agricultural issues that are being considered by the national farm organization include:

- ✓ Control of communicable diseases and the need to be willing to support restrictions in interstate movement of livestock, if needed;
- ✓ Identification of all imported meat;
- ✓ Informing the public on treatment of farm animals through education and letting them know it's in the best interest of animal producers to raise their livestock in the most comfortable environment; and
- ✓ Marketing by organizing into groups to allow farmers to be in a position to command an adequate price through production control.

Gardner is new SSSA president-elect

Walter H. Gardner, professor of soils in the Department of Agronomy and Soils at Washington State University, became president-elect of SSSA.

He will become president of the scientific, educational organization at the 1982 annual meeting in Anaheim, California.

His principal research interests are in soil physics and soil-water-plant relations. He has made many contributions, including measurement of soil water content using gamma ray and neutron attenuation, concurrent measurement of both soil water content and bulk density using two gamma ray energies, psychrometric measurement of soil and plant water potentials, and measurement of water status near absorbing roots and in root growth, water flow, and retention in layered soils.

This research has contributed to a better understanding of water movement in soil, particularly in stratified soil and in soil near absorbing roots, and to techniques for measurement of water content and potential in soil and plants.

He is known for his time-lapse motion picture, "Water Movement in Soil," which is used worldwide as an aid for teaching principles of water retention and flow. He has

also authored or coauthored more than 70 papers. Currently a member of the editorial board of *Geoderma*, Gardner has served as associate editor and editor-in-chief of *Soil Science Society of America Proceedings*, now the *Soil Science Society of America Journal*.

Gardner is a Guggenheim Fellow (1964), an ASA Fellow (1966), and an SSSA Fellow (1976).

Other newly-elected SSSA officers for 1981-82 include: D.W. Nelson, Purdue University, West Lafayette, board representative, Soil Microbiology and Biochemistry (Division S-3); J.V. Mannering, Purdue University, West Lafayette, board representative, Soil and Water Management and Conservation (Division S-6); and W.C. Lynn, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Soil Conservation Service, Lincoln, Nebraska, board representative, Soil Mineralogy (Division S-9).

Also, A.H. Ferguson, Montana State University, Bozeman, chairman-elect, Soil Physics (Division S-1); H.L. Bohn, University of Arizona, Tucson, chairman-elect, Soil Chemistry (Division S-2); D.H. Hubbell, University of Florida, Gainesville, chairman-elect, Soil Microbiology and Biochemistry (Division S-3); D.R. Christenson, Michigan State

University, East Lansing, chairman-elect, Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition (Division S-4); and G.F. Hall, Ohio State University, Columbus, chairman-elect, Soil Genesis, Morphology and Classification (Division S-5).

In addition, D.E. Miller, U.S.

Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service, Prosser, Washington, chairman-elect, Soil and Water Management and Conservation (Division S-6); R.F. Fisher, University of Florida, Gainesville, chairman-elect, Forest and Range Soils (Division S-7); R.G. Hanson, University of Missouri, Columbia, chairman-elect, Fertilizer Technology and Use (Division S-8); and P.M. Huang, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, chairman-elect, Soil Mineralogy (Division S-9).

USDA reports brucellosis status changes

WASHINGTON, D.C. — With the certifying of Box Elder County, the entire state of Utah has become certified free of cattle brucellosis in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's latest monthly assessment.

On the other hand, Childress County, Texas, slipped from certified-free to modified-certified status because of infection in local cattle herds when the county was due for recertification.

Dr. Paul Becton, director of the national brucellosis eradication program for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said Utah becomes the 32nd state to have all counties certified-free. The state was free of brucellosis some years ago, but infected or exposed cattle imported from high-prevalence areas caused new outbreaks.

An infectious disease of cattle and other livestock, brucellosis can be transmitted to humans as undulant fever. In animals, the disease causes abortions and reproductive problems.

According to Becton, the system of rating counties for degrees of brucellosis prevalence is expected to give way, on Jan. 1, 1982, to a statewide rating system. A state now qualifies as certified free by having each and every county attain the status.

The new system, as proposed, would rate states as "free" (no infection for 12 months) "Class A" (herd infection rate no greater than 0.25 percent), "Class B" (herd infection no greater than 1.5 percent), or "Class C" (herd infection rate greater than 1.5 percent or 15 herds per 1,000). Only cattle from "free" states

would be able to move interstate with no testing requirements. One or more tests would be required to move from lesser rated states.

By the present rating system, only the affected county loses status when a brucellosis outbreak occurs. Next year, an entire state could lose status unless the infection is promptly contained.

A state could have a two-area classification after Jan. 1 under certain circumstances but whole-state classification would be the general rule.

Eradication of brucellosis is a top priority project for cooperating state-federal agencies concerned with animal health.

