

# Lancaster Farming

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\$7.50 per year

## Block seeks total control of dairy support

**BY DONNA TOMMELLEO**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. — Dairy farmers can expect no change in the long-standing \$13.10 dairy support price as a result of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John Block's announcement, Wednesday, that he is seeking legislation which will give him complete authority to set the milk price support level.

If enacted, Block said he would not adjust the support level until January 1, 1983. Without the legislation, USDA anticipates spending \$1.94 billion during fiscal 1983 and up to \$4 billion between fiscal 1983 and 1985. The legislation is expected to be introduced into Congress next week.

"We will monitor the situation until January 1. On that date we will make the adjustments up or down if they are needed," Block said. "At this time it does not appear we would have to make a reduction below \$12 per hundredweight on January 1.

"This action will send an effective signal to the industry that production has to be cut," he added.

However, Block's "signal" triggered outrage from several groups including the National Milk Producers' Federation, dairy producers' lobbying voice in Washington and the National Farmers Organization, a collective bargaining group.

"We are opposed without reservation to giving any

secretary of agriculture total discretionary authority to set price supports," explained NMPF spokeswoman Doni Dondero.

She said the NMPF fears that any person with total authority could be affected by heavy administration pressure and consequently set the price support at a "disastrous" level.

"Without minimum price assurance, farmers will live in total uncertainty," Dondero remarked.

The Secretary's emergency

dairy plan includes eight provisions which do not need congressional approval. But the NMPF charged that the plan does not offer any incentive for farmers to reduce production.

Block, however, said recent figures show signs that dairy farmers are beginning to adjust voluntarily. March production was up only 1 percent over last year, compared to a 3 percent increase seen for the 12-months ending December 31, 1981.

"With this initiative coming

from the producers themselves, combined with other features in our emergency plan, I believe we'll see some positive results by January 1," Block said.

NFO dairy department spokesman Lindsay Lieser said his organization proposed a plan during the Kansas City seminar which did offer an incentive to cull cows.

"Block wants to cull dairy farmers, not cows," Lieser charged.

The NMPF has indicated that

they do find favor with a couple of Block's provisions. Increasing distribution of surplus dairy products in domestic feeding programs is a concept the NMPF has supported for a long time, remarked Dondero.

The emergency plan also would allow the Commodity Credit Corporation to donate more dairy products to the United States and to needy persons abroad. It proposes legislation which would

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## State budget smiles on ag

**HARRISBURG** — Federal and state budgets have been drawing much attention this week as legislators worked furiously to come up with agreeable financial ledgers for the coming fiscal year.

Here in Pennsylvania, the fate of the budget actions met with a more favorable and final end than did the federal budget negotiations, which are still being debated in committees. With almost two months to spare, Governor Dick Thornburgh scrawled his name on the dotted line for the new state budget. With that, Pennsylvania's governmental agencies received their "spending-money" allowance for the next 12 months, beginning July 1.

The state's Department of

Agriculture fared well in the final budget allocations, receiving a total of \$19,910,000 for 1982-83. This figure is up \$1,672,000 from last year's \$18,238,000 total, about half of the Department's original budget request.

Out of the approved 1982-83 budget for agriculture, about \$18 million will be needed to cover general operating expenses at the Department, such as salaries, benefits, office maintenance, etc. This year's general operations figure is up by about \$1½ million over last year.

With the remaining dollars, the Department of Agriculture will be carrying out its various programs, such as the brucellosis vaccine program. This important disease-

prevention service has received a budget line of \$150,000, up \$1,000 from last year, and will help finance inoculations at \$1 a head.

Another area of the Department's budget that has seen a slight increase in funding is research and promotion. The state will have an additional \$20,000 to spend in promoting agricultural products and on research, such as stray voltage, with the \$220,000 budget approved for next year.

And, farmers who have to depopulate herds due to brucellosis, or who lose livestock due to dog attacks will have a larger reimbursement "kitty" at the state level, while federal funds continue to be cut back. The Department's animal indemnity

budget has been increased to \$275,000, up from last year's \$196,000. But even with this increase Secretary Penrose Hallowell pointed out "we won't pick up all that we're losing with federal indemnity down."

In a slightly related program, reimbursement of kennel construction has received \$55,000 this year. Moneys in this fund are used to finance municipal or humane league dog kennels. These groups can receive a maximum of \$15,000 from the Department; for each dollar they receive, they must spend two, according to a Department spokesman.

The farmer who participates in livestock and dairy shows at the

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## Harding, Sollenberger sweep PSU Dairy Expo

**BY DONNA TOMMELLEO**  
UNIVERSITY PARK — Books, papers and other academic assignments were put aside last Saturday as more than 90 Penn State students competed in the University's 57th Annual Dairy Exposition.

The all-day event culminated six

weeks of clipping, scrubbing and halter-breaking. Later that evening, participants and guests were treated to a much deserved meal at the awards banquet held in the Penn State Sheraton.

One banquet table in particular was near collapse as trophy after

trophy accumulated. At the base of the mountain of awards sat a third-year student named James Harding.

The Brookville native swept the Expo in all-around competition. Harding was the unanimous choice of judges Berneta Gable and Peter

Witmer for All-Around Champion Showman and Fitter.

On his way to the top, the agriculture business major collected the titles of All-breed Champion Fitter and Showman and Holstein Champion Fitter and Showman.

In addition, Harding was honored for his hard work by the Pennsylvania Holstein Association and received one of two herdsman awards.

Gable and Witmer went with

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## Milk's the official 'refresher'

**BY JOYCE BUPP**  
Staff Correspondent

**HARRISBURG** — It's official. Milk is now the "real" drink of Pennsylvania.

Sporting a red and white "Real Seal" on his lapel and flanked by representatives of the state's dairy industry, Governor Thornburgh on Tuesday signed into law H.B. 1351, which proclaims that "Milk is hereby selected, designated and adopted as the official beverage of

the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

Milk now joins the white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, Great Dane, mountain laurel, firefly, hemlock and the phrase, "Keystone State," as official symbols of the Commonwealth.

Wedge between other signings of library and banking bills, the "milk bill" ceremony played to a crowd of backers of the three new laws who jammed into the ornate governor's executive offices on the second floor of the Capitol building.

Charlene Rohrer, Pennsylvania's dairy princess, pinned a "Real Seal" pin on the Governor's dark suit and presented him with a "Milk Is My Bag" tote imprinted with a cartoon cow

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James Harding, senior, took all the marbles during the 57th Penn State Dairy Expo, last Saturday. The Penn State junior from Brookville bested more than 90 students and was named Grand Champion Showman and

Fitter. Harding is flanked by show judges Berneta Snider Gable of New Enterprise and Peter Witmer from Willow Street. More winners inside on page A20.

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