

National Grange unveils dairy plan

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Meeting at its national headquarters in Washington, D.C., the executive committee of the National Grange recently unveiled a plan to address the problem of over-accumulation of dairy products under the government's price support program.

The Grange's proposal is designed to reduce government outlays for the purchase of surplus

dairy products by offering dairy farmers incentives to reduce production and penalties for increasing the size of milking herds. The plan is patterned after the Grange's National Excess Base Plan, first formulated in 1959.

Edward Andersen, Master of the National Grange, said, "The farmer will not have an assigned base or market quota that would acquire a capital value. Through a

system of production incentives and penalties, each farmer would determine the amount of milk he or she wishes to produce for the market price of \$13.10 per hundredweight."

Andersen said the Grange will support a five cent per hundredweight mandatory assessment on all milk marketed in the country. The check-off would be used to promote basic

manufactured dairy products, emphasizing those products which have been purchased by the Commodity Credit Corporation under the current price support plan.

"Per capita consumption of dairy products has declined in recent years," said Andersen. "A new producer-financed market research and promotion program must be part of any self help dairy program," he continued.

According to Andersen, the Grange program is designed not only to address the current over-production in the dairy sector, but will also provide flexibility to assure an adequate supply of dairy products under more normal market conditions.

"This plan will protect the producers' market share without causing undue hardships on anyone who wants to begin dairy farming," Andersen noted.

The Grange's plan also incorporates provisions of the the Grange's National Excess Base Plan with the proposal adopted by the National Milk Producers Federation. The following items were incorporated in the NMPF plan in order to meet the objectives of Grange Policy:

New Producers — Recognizing that any program must allow new producers to enter dairy production, the Grange suggests that until demand of dairy products is within 2 percent of supply, new producers would receive the full price support on 60 percent of their production.

The remaining 40 percent would receive the reduced support price.

This 60/40 rate would apply during the farmer's first year of production only.

Increased production penalties — To eliminate any incentive for producers to increase production, the Grange submits the following proposal. Until the National Dairy Board determines that demand is within 2 percent of supply, any producer who increases his or her production over the amount produced in the same quarter of the previous year shall receive a percentage price reduction equal to the national average percentage reduction plus a reduction equal to the amount of his or her increased production for that quarter.

Reduced production incentive — To encourage producers to cut back on production, the Grange suggests that any dairy producer who can prove that he or she has decreased production below that of the corresponding period of the previous year, may file for a rebate of his or her surplus production assessment.

Furthermore, if a producer can prove that his or her annual production in the year of enactment of this program is below that of the previous year, including any national average percentage reduction, she or he shall be exempt from the national surplus assessment.

National milk standard revision — The grange endorses the following increases in minimum national standards: Whole milk — 3.5 percent butterfat, 8.7 percent solids-not-fat; Low fat — 2 percent butterfat, 10 percent SNF; Nonfat — .25 percent butterfat, 9 percent SNF.

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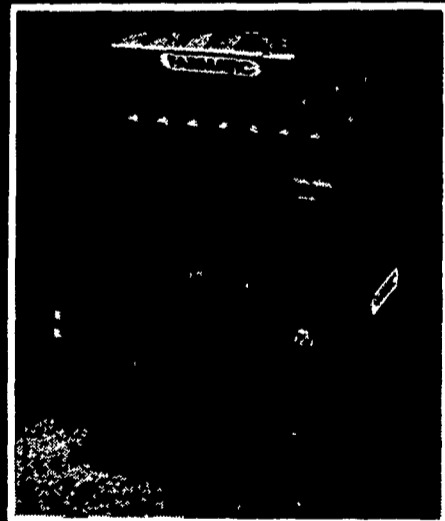
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