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At PFU Annual Meeting

Oberstar unveils new dairy bill

BY SHEILA MILLER

HERSHEY — There'll be another dairy bill introduced into Congress late this month that will attempt to tackle the surplus milk situation and the controversy centering around federal milk support programs and U.S. Dept. of Agriculture assessments. The bill's prime sponsor, Congressman James L. Oberstar (D-Mn.), talked about his dairy program ideas with farmers and the press during the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Union Tuesday evening.

Acknowledging that Pennsylvania Farmers' Union was celebrating its first birthday as a chartered organization within the fold of the National Farmers' Union, Oberstar stated that his new bill, which is in the formulation stage at the present time but should be ready for hearings in March, will be similar to a bill he introduced in the 97th Congress last year. He expressed his hopes that this bill will have the support of family-sized dairy farmers throughout the U.S. His bill last year was supported by Farmers' Union and others and failed to be passed for lack of one vote.

Basically, Oberstar said his bill will call for:

- ✓ a 70 percent of parity support level on the price of milk, no less than \$13.10 per hundredweight;
- ✓ milk production goals to be set on a yearly basis by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture at a level which will be determined as necessary to keep production from going to excessive levels, but no less than 10 percent of base;

- ✓ 1982 to be established as the production base for dairy farmers (the actual production rather than an average production over a period of years). New dairy farmers would have a production base assigned to them, as determined by local agricultural stabilization and conservation committees.

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Minnesota Congressman James L. Oberstar unveiled his latest legislative dairy strategy this week during the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Union in Hershey. Oberstar said he plans to have his bill, which would gear government payments to production quotas, ready for introduction later this month.

S.W. Pa. dairy co-op bankrupt

HARRISBURG — A southwestern Pennsylvania dairy milk marketing cooperative is closing the chapters of its business story on a less than "happily-ever-after" note. United Dairy Farmers, a Pittsburgh-based cooperative, declared bankruptcy last October and recently sold its 49 stores to Schneider's Dairy for \$146,000.

According to Attorney Joseph Bernstein who was appointed by a

federal bankruptcy judge to serve as trustee for the UDF assets, the sale of these 49 stores "stopped the drain" on UDF members, employees, and shareholders, both financially and emotionally.

Bernstein noted that the debts of the milk co-op have not been satisfied by the sale of the stores. He noted that he hopes to sell a portion of UDF's remaining assets, which include a dairy plant and

store built on 12 acres of land, along with five other stores and the land on which they were built, to generate the cash proceeds to satisfy the creditors.

"I hope to deliver the corporation back to the shareholders in six months time still owning a building subject to heavy mortgage so equity can be developed over the years," said Bernstein.

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Bay pollution spurs manure study

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

LANCASTER — Because poultry manure has been pinpointed as "one of the main culprits" responsible for the ever-increasing pollution problem in the Chesapeake Bay, various representatives from the Pennsylvania Poultry Federation and the Pa. Department of Agriculture are currently studying alternate methods for handling the manure problem.

Chief among these ideas is to market the manure so poultry producers can profit from the time expended to handle it, thereby keeping its especially rich nutrient content away from the vital Susquehanna River, one of the Bay's main tributaries.

As any good environmentalist knows, nutrients are advantageous to a stream, but an overload can cause problems. This is what the Chesapeake Bay Study Commission has determined has happened to the Bay. And according to John Hoffman, executive director of the Pa. Poultry Federation, they have

"tremendous data" to support their claim.

"The Susquehanna River runs through a lot of very productive farmland here in Pennsylvania, and the Commission thinks we are overfertilizing," Hoffman explained. "One of their focal points is poultry manure. So, we (poultry producers) are looked at as one of the main culprits of causing this pollution."

"The group is looking at the situation from the perspective 'What can we do to make the manure a marketable product?'" he said.

Hoffman noted that the Federation first looked at the potential of shipping the manure to the Bedford County area for corn growers, but quickly decided against this idea when statistics showed the venture would not be cost effective beyond a distance of 50 miles.

The mushroom industry also proved futile due to their decreasing purchases of fertilizers as a result of Chinese imports.

The group is currently scouting

the possibility of supplying the manure to vegetable growers in the New Jersey area.

According to Hoffman, this is where the problem stands after two meetings. Other meetings will be scheduled after a conclusion has been drawn concerning the vegetable grower's interest in purchasing the manure.

Block calls for comments on 50-cent milk tax

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Proposals to implement, as of April 1, two Congressionally authorized 50-cent per hundredweight deductions from the sale of milk marketed in the United States were published this week in the Federal Register for public comment, according to Secretary of Agriculture John B. Block.

The Act of these two deductions was originally implemented on Dec. 31, but has been barred since Dec. 21 by a federal district court in Columbia, S.C. Block said the decision to take comments on the proposals is in view of the court's decision.

"It was the intent of Congress that we implement these deductions," Block said. "They are the only tools we currently have to offset the excessive cost to the taxpayer of the dairy price support program. These costs now exceed \$2 billion annually, and they will continue heading in the wrong direction as long as there are no incentives for cutting production."

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Truckers' strike helps hog sales, hurts milk pickups

LANCASTER — The independent trucker's strike has non-striking truck drivers sitting on the edges of their seats this week as they roll their big rigs along Pennsylvania's highways.

Reports have varied concerning violence and harassment in parts of the state. There have been no major problems in the southeastern portion of the state with agricultural transporters, but such is not the case in other regions of Pennsylvania.

Here in the southeast, some good may be coming out of the independent trucker's strike. According to Lloyd Hoover, manager of the swine division of Walter

Dunlap, Lancaster, there were more local hogs bought by packers at the stockyards this week. He stated that the striking truckers have restricted the flow of Midwest livestock to the East.

"There's been a lot of strike pressure along the route between Indiana and here," observed Hoover, "and that's where most of our hogs come from. Some of the truckers who made that run had some trouble and they're not anxious to make another trip."

PennAg Industries Association's David R. Brubaker reported some calls from members with problems resulting from the truckers' strike,

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L.F. offers 1983 Sire Summary



LANCASTER — For those dairy producers looking for ways to stay current with today's ever-changing industry, the January 1983 Sire Summary, page D20, provides an abundance of useful genetic data. The Active AI Summary, compiled every six months by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, now includes milk component summaries for protein and solid-not-fat for those bulls with component repeatability of more than 40 percent. Lancaster Farming is happy to present 7 pages of genetic-packed information for our dairy producers' use in sire selection.