

Lancaster Farming

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Farmers Union

House bill on dairy due Wed.

ROTHSVILLE — Members of the Lancaster Farmers Union were told Thursday night at their first annual banquet at the Rothsville Fire Hall that new dairy legislation is scheduled to be reported out of committee in the House of Representatives on Wednesday.

The report on the status of federal dairy legislation was part of a report to the Lancaster County group by Paul Sacia, assistant director of the National Farmers Union Office in Washington, D.C. who handles lobbying efforts.

"The dairy legislation is expected to come out of Congressman Tom Harkin's committee on Wednesday," Sacia said.

"We're not sure what vehicle will be used, such as the Federated Milk Producers proposed bill.

"But, it really doesn't make any difference because the final form will undoubtedly be some sort of compromise."

Sacia in his legislative report covered a wide variety of subjects in addition to dairy legislation, in which the Pennsylvania Farmers Union was unsuccessful in a last-ditch effort to halt the 50-cent assessment.

While he was talking, he said that the vote on the ag credit bill should have been completed in the House. This would provide a total of \$800 million in emergency loan money to farmers with a deferral mechanism to those who meet certain criteria. Sacia said he expected the bill to get through Congress, but the real test would be in trying to override an expected Reagan veto.

(Turn to Page A32)

Meet our Mr. Misguided Mallard



Who says the Lancaster Farming offices aren't located close to livestock of sorts? Out our window, this misguided mallard was spotted on an adjoining roof in downtown Lititz. Chilly weather and the surprise snow obviously had him confused. He landed to get his bearings, before deciding whether to head north or south.

Dairying hearings continue

BY TRISH WILLIAMS

LANCASTER — Final decisions are still being awaited on hearings held this week in Harrisburg, and last week in Washington, D.C., over the controversial 50 cents assessment.

Thursday a second hearing was held in Harrisburg before U.S. Middle District Court Judge William W. Caldwell. In a previous hearing held April 15, Judge Caldwell turned down the motion of Pa. Farmers Union and five individual plaintiffs for an immediate restraining order against the U. S. Department of Agriculture's collection of the 50 cents assessment.

When the restraining order was denied after the first hearing, Pa. Farmers Union requested a second hearing date, to try to obtaining a preliminary injunction. Spokesperson for PFU, Marion Furman said Thursday's hearing was an attempt to convince Judge Caldwell that unless a preliminary injunction is issued against U.S.D.A. before the first deductions are made from the producers' milk checks, they will suffer immediate and irreparable harm.

The plaintiffs also had to prove that the defendant (U.S.D.A.) would suffer little harm compared to the plaintiffs, and that there are serious enough issues involved to warrant a preliminary injunction. If a preliminary injunction is granted, a hearing date will be set for a final decision to be made.

The plaintiffs in the suit were Carl Kaufman, PFU executive director; Farmers Union Vice President Barbara Woods, Franklin County; Northern Tier

(Turn to Page A32)

Mandata poultry financial stew boils over for 60 growers in Pa.

MANDATA — The financial stew involving the Mandata Poultry Processing Company that has been bubbling for the past couple of years boiled over this week affecting some 60 growers in a half-dozen Pennsylvania counties and an Elizabethtown hatchery in Lancaster County.

The Northumberland County-based poultry processor apparently canceled its grower contracts during the past week, leaving the 60 growers with all birds under four weeks of age and payments owed that may total from \$10,000 to \$30,000 per grower.

In addition, Longenecker's

Hatchery, Elizabethtown, also apparently was left holding the bag with large numbers of pullets ready to be delivered to growers and an even larger number of eggs in the three-week set period.

Amidst this turmoil, the Pennsylvania State Grange has again called on the state to, not only come to immediate aid of these growers as far as markets are concerned, but to pass legislation that would require bonding of all poultry processors and brokers doing business in the Commonwealth.

The Grange estimates that perhaps a million dollars is owed

the growers by Mandata, which has slipped some 16 weeks behind in payments for the past year and a half.

A Gettysburg area grower, who had been with Mandata for the past 10 years, is likely typical of the poultry farmers caught up in the situation. Here's his story in his own words:

"We haven't heard anything from Mandata directly. But that's the way they have been all along.

"I was cleaning out my house and got a call from the hatchery that there wouldn't be any birds coming.

(Turn to Page A19)

Pa. State Grange is taking a 'look' at itself

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania State Grange is taking a look at itself.

And what better time to do it than during Pennsylvania State Grange Week.

At age 109, the State Grange is going to its members and some outsiders in a self-analysis survey to see what members and others think of the Grange, its leadership and programs and whether they think this oldest of farm organizations is keeping up with the times.

The questionnaire survey was developed and is being directed by Arba L. Henry, who is on leave from his vo-ag post at Solanco High School in Lancaster County for post-graduate studies in ag education at Penn State.

The study — "An Analysis of the Pennsylvania State Grange" — is being conducted among more than

1,300 Grangers across the state. Each of the Grangers selected

Survey author



Arba L. Henry

randomly are being asked to fill out and return a seven-page questionnaire, which seeks data in several major areas:

—How effective is the Grange leadership at both the state and subordinate levels?

—How appropriate and up-to-date are the Grange's objectives, services and programs?

—What's the image of the Grange through the eyes of both members and non-members?

—Is the Grange's organizational structure old-fashioned?

In his explanation of the need for the study, Henry cites the declining membership in the Pennsylvania Grange, despite it being the largest and oldest rural-farm organization in the Commonwealth.

"During the 1970's, membership dropped from 55,258 in 1970 to 46,351 in 1979," Henry explained.

Legislative dinner

More than 450 state legislators and Grange members are expected for the Pa. State Grange legislative dinner at the Penn Harris Motor Inn on Monday evening.

Featured speaker at the dinner will be Dean Samuel H. Smith, of the Penn State College of Agriculture.

"At the present time, there are slightly more than 42,000 members. This represents a drop of some 4,000 members in three years.

"If this rate of decline should

continue, the Pennsylvania State Grange, as known, would cease to exist by the end of the century."

Grange Master Charles E.

(Turn to Page A31)

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See editorial on Page A10