

Milk Security Fund legislation draft nears completion

HARRISBURG — The drafting of proposed legislation to rescue Pennsylvania's bankrupt and stalled Milk Security Fund may be completed early next month.

A sub-committee composed of dealer, co-op and farm group representatives met for the third time this week on the proposed legislation.

"We met for the third time this week and are getting some consensus of agreement among representatives of the co-ops, farm groups and dealers," explained Harold Ely, chairman of the legislative section of the Pennsylvania Association of Farmer Cooperatives, who is heading up the effort.

"We'll be meeting again on Friday, June 3, and hope to fine tune the proposals and get some specific language in the draft of the legislation."

Ely said the proposed legislation will concentrate on the two main areas of need to attempt to solve the present fund dilemma.

—First, tighter regulations will be written into the bill so that the fund doesn't experience a recurrence of the immediate drying up of the fund following the bankruptcy of three dealers.

—Additional contributions will be needed to rebuild the fund back up to a certain sound financial level.

In addition to Ely, members of the sub-committee working on the proposed legislation include

Charles Wismer, of the Pa. State Grange; Jim Fahere, of Inter-State Milk Producers Co-op; Dan Cook, of PDA's legal department; Henry Geissinger, of the Pa. Milk Dealers; and Earl Fink, of the Milk Marketing Board.

Also in Harrisburg this week, the State Council of Farm Organizations held its annual legislative breakfast to bring members up-to-date on what's happening with farm-related bills.

The session also stressed concern over the state budget and particularly as it affects the Department of Agriculture, Penn State, University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School and the DER's Bureau of Soil and Water Conservation.

Particular concern was expressed over the amount budgeted for the PDA. As an example, it was pointed out that the staff of the Bureau of Foods and Chemistry is down some 20 people.

The overall recommendation of the Council was to push for a \$3 million increase in the PDA's budget.

The Council session also reviewed the status of various farm-related bills:

—The Senate bill to require date of packaging on perishable food has been tabled in the Senate Ag Committee.

—The Senate bill to lift the 8 percent ceiling on the stock dividends that can be paid by co-

ops has been reported out of committee.

Other bills discussed included those dealing with exempting grain bins from property taxes, prohibiting hunting in unharvested fields with enforcement by the

Game Commission, the beverage container deposit bill, permitting owners to remove traps from their land and the oil and gas lease bill.

The Council also accepted the resignation of John Wylie, of Agway, from the Executive

Committee and named Gail McPherson, of Penns Agri-Women, to the committee.

Agway is realigning its offices, and Wylie will be moving from Harrisburg to Syracuse, N.Y. — DA

Helfrick pushes for new dairy legislation

HARRISBURG — Senator Edward W. Helfrick, Chairman of the Pennsylvania Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee is urging members of the House Agriculture Committee in Washington to adopt new legislation to do away with the 50 cents assessment.

Helfrick, in a letter to members of the House Agriculture Committee and Subcommittee, registered concern over the issue of the federal Dairy Price Support Program, and the various proposals that are circulating through the halls of Congress to address the surplus situation.

The issue could spell economic disaster to Pennsylvania dairy farmers, said Helfrick, and as a result, have a negative impact on the entire state's economy.

Pennsylvania's 15,500 dairy farmers provide the Keystone State with a revenue of \$1.3 billion annually. With the present Administration's 50-cent milk tax that is being assessed on each hundred

pounds of milk marketed, Pennsylvania stands to lose \$45 million in income, Helfrick asserted.

"It doesn't take a mathematician to figure out that if our state's farmers are losing money, the supporting industries - processors, milk haulers, wholesalers and retailers - will also experience a financial slump," warned Helfrick. "When the 27,000 Pennsylvanians employed on dairy farms find their paychecks suffering the same fate as the farmers' milk checks after the 50-cents per hundredweight of milk is subtracted off and when the 12,000 people employed in Pennsylvania's 220 dairy processing plants also find their salaries correspondingly cut, hardtimes in the dairy industry will no longer be a theory alluded to by economists—it will be a stark reality."

Helfrick, speaking on behalf of the Pennsylvania Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, stressed the need to find a better solution to the dairy price support program than the current 50-cent assessment. "We, along with the major farm organizations in the state—the Pennsylvania State Grange, the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, and the Pennsylvania Farmers' Union—are strongly in favor of establishing a federal

dairy program which incorporates an incentive concept for reducing milk production, and thereby reducing the purchases of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

"We feel farmers who continue to overproduce excessive amounts of milk should receive a milk support price that penalizes them for ignoring the surplus problem, one that is substantially lower than the current \$13.10 per hundredweight," Helfrick said. "Conversely, those farmers who voluntarily cutback on their base production should be rewarded for their efforts and paid a premium price for their milk. And for those farmers who maintain a 'status quo' production level, a 'status quo' price of \$13.10 should be paid for their milk."

Helfrick said his committee does not favor any price support plan which will not encourage a reduction in milk production, the only sensible answer to the surplus cheese and butter situation.

In his closing remarks Helfrick said, "Pennsylvania's small dairy farmers will not be able to absorb a drop in the price support level and stay in business without the addition of cows to their herds to generate the income needed to pay fixed bills. This defeats the entire rationale behind the 50-cent tax or price support cut."

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Sale Reports

A Public Sale of farm machinery and antiques was held May 21 by Vertia Straub at the Henry Straub farm along Rt. 104, 4 miles south of Middleburg, Snyder Co., Pa. There were over 300 registered buyers present.

Some prices were: dry sink \$800, quilts \$125 to \$410 each, amber carnival rose pitcher w/7 tumblers \$510, tramp comb rack \$110, 6 plank bottom chairs with original finish \$150 each, set of 6 chairs with original finish \$125 each, wood grain rake \$20, wood block plane \$21, Farmall H tractor \$775, N.H. wood saw \$220, apple butter kettle \$220, flour chest w/dough tray \$265 and blanket chest \$300.

Auctioneer was Earl W. Eash.

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A Public Sale of Hereford cattle and horse equipment was held May 21 by Lester L. Gruber, 11 miles west of Hagerstown, Maryland before a nice sized crowd.

Some prices included: Swab 2 horse wagon \$400, Wagon seat \$60, wagon jack \$50, single trees to \$12 ea., cherry seeder \$45, harness \$30 per set, teamster whip \$50, breast chains \$9 per set, shoemakers last w/10 feet \$45 and yearling Herefords to \$340.

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