

Senate adopts dairy, tobacco legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Senate October 7, by a voice vote, passed the Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983. The bill provides for modifications to both the Federal dairy price support program and the Federal tobacco program.

"This bill makes comprehensive changes in both of these commodity programs," said Senator Jesse Helms, Chairman of the Agriculture Committee. "For dairy, it means supply and demand will be brought more into balance. Hopefully, we can now stop building massive government surpluses of dairy products and start reducing government outlays."

"The changes made in the tobacco program are both significant and far reaching. By freezing the price support, we will help make our tobacco farmers more competitive in world markets. The changes in the lease and transfer provisions will disarm critics of the tobacco program and ensure the sound continuation of the program for years to come."

The dairy provisions include:

1) Lowering the price support from \$13.10 to \$12.60 per hundredweight between the first month after date of enactment and September 30, 1985, except that a) on March 31, 1985, the price may be reduced 50 cents if estimated Commodity Credit Corporation

purchases exceed 6 billion pounds, and b) on July 1, 1985, the price may be reduced by 50 cents if estimated CCC purchases exceed 5 billion pounds, or c) on July 1, 1985, the price will increase by at least 50 cents if estimated annual CCC purchases are 5 billion pounds or less. 1983 CCC purchases are expected to reach 16 billion pounds.

2) Requiring a 50 cents per hundredweight reduction from the price of all milk sold through December 31, 1984, the money to be used by CCC to pay for the dairy diversion program.

3) Establishing a 15-month paid diversion program, which provides a \$10 per hundredweight diversion payment to producers who can establish a net reduction in production of between 5 and 30 percent from a base period. Limitations are placed on the transfer of dairy herds and on the use of idled production facilities. The Secretary is required to minimize any adverse effect on beef and pork producers in carrying out the diversion program.

4) Establishing a dairy promotion and research program, funded by a 15 cent per hundredweight mandatory assessment on all milk sold. The program would be administered by a 38-member board, and would be terminated if not approved by 50 percent of producers in a referendum held immediately prior to September 30, 1985.

Modifications agreed to for the tobacco program include the following:

1) Freezing the support price for the 1984 crop of Flue-cured tobacco at the 1982 level. The 1985 price would be frozen if it would not be more than 5 percent greater than the 1984 level under the regular formula. The Secretary would also be given additional flexibility to reduce price support on certain

grades of Flue-cured tobacco.

2) For the 1984 and 1985 crops of Burley and other tobaccos, the Secretary could set the price support level to maintain the normal differential between these tobaccos and Flue-cured tobacco.

3) Deleting the "double assessment" in which both the lessor and the lessee contribute to the no-net-cost tobacco program fund, so that only the lessee would

make the contribution.

4) Giving the Stabilization cooperative greater flexibility in the use of no-net-cost tobacco program funds in ways mutually beneficial to producers and the CCC.

5) Increasing the new tobacco growers quota percentage for Flue-cured tobacco from the present 1 percent of the annual (Turn to Page A39)

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