

Is bad press on dairy bill justified?

CORNING, Ia. — Dairy farmers have been subjected to ridicule by media editorialists ever since the dairy compromise bill was signed into law by President Reagan.

Editorialists have speculated on what they themselves might "not do" and be paid by the government for not doing it, says a spokesman for the National Farmers

Organization. What they apparently do not realize, or choose to ignore, is that the dairy program is financed primarily by the dairymen themselves and that the American taxpayers will save \$2.3 billion under the revised program in 1983-84 from what they paid in 1982-83.

Incentive payments to farmers

are not a new concept in government programs. It has been done for many years in crop farming when farmers are paid to idle land for a season. The difference is that dairy farmers are taxed on the milk they do produce to help pay for the government costs of the program. And they will operate under very strict rules when they

enter the program with cutbacks based on 1981-82 production.

All figures on production and costs are estimates but government costs for 1982-83 are estimated at \$2.5 billion (purchase of "surplus" dairy products). Those purchases will drop to \$186 million in 1983-84.

Incentive payments to farmers

will run about \$963 million but taxes on milk sold by dairymen will amount to about \$626 million for a total government outlay of about \$336 million.

Thus, the total government outlay is expected to be about \$194 million.

The figures note production is expected to drop 13 billion pounds, from 136 billion to 125 billion pounds with purchases by the government dropping from 14-16 billion pounds in 1982-83 down to 1 billion pounds in 1983-84. Commercial sales of dairy products by processing plants (not sold to the government) are expected to rise from 121 billion pounds in 1982-83 to 124 billion pounds in 1983-84.



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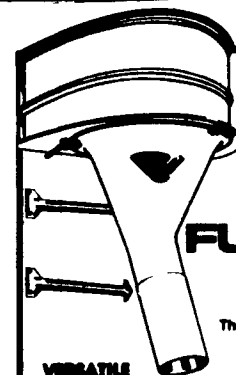
The December meeting of the All Breeds 4-H Sheep Club was held recently at the Kesty Home in Hampton. Members exchanged gifts and brought refreshments for the Christmas party portion of the meeting. Laura Menard discussed Ketosis, a sheep pregnancy disease, with the group. Plans were made for their 1984 Window Display entry. The group will hold their next meeting at the Tropeano home in Annadale on Jan. 7 at 3 p.m.

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