

PFA legislative visit

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that two-thirds of agriculture does not receive direct support from the government," Eckel said, "Livestock and poultry sectors, a wide range of fruits, vegetables, specialty crops — they're all subject to risk without direct government support."

In addition, he noted, "Agriculture and farm life have changed drastically in the last few decades and will continue to change. That's another aspect that should be part of our consideration in the development of a new farm program law."

Basic questions concerning the government's role in supporting agriculture, such as how much support is desirable and at what cost, must also be answered in deciding new farm programs, Eckel told the gathering. The farm program's effect on foreign trade should be considered too, said Eckel.

Turning to other issues concerning agriculture, Eckel said PFA members believe the federal deficit is too big and the deficit proposed in the 1985 federal budget is inexcusable.

"Let's freeze expenditures until we get a fix in place to cut runaway government spending," Eckel said, "The fix I'm talking about does not come from the hypodermic needle in the form of new taxes. It comes from careful consideration of cutting unnecessary fat from the federal budget."

One scheduled tax increase which affects farmers is the July 1 hike in the heavy truck use tax

mandated in the Surface Transportation Act of 1982. Eckel said PFA is pressing for an exemption for farmer-owned and farmer-used trucks which are not for hire and used mostly for local hauling.

Water has become an issue in Washington this year, Eckel noted. Amendments are being proposed for the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Under the Clean Water Act, Eckel said, "Funds should be provided for demonstration projects to educate farmers about the adverse effects of agricultural runoff into our streams." In enactment of Clean Water Act amendments, Eckel said, "We are also asking for a reasonable approach to policing the quality of

drinking water for both human and animal consumption, but also recognizing traditional water rights."

For the upcoming election year, Eckel said, PFA is encouraging its members to take an active role in every level of the political system. He announced that PFA's 54 county farmers' associations would be conducting a precinct-by-precinct voter registration campaign to enroll at least 6,000 new voters.

"We plan to be involved in the legislative process from selecting candidates to promoting our members' ideas with the elective governing bodies," Eckel said, "We want our voices heard and our wishes known to the leaders of this big and wonderful country."

NEDCO increases dues

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The Northeast Dairy Cooperative Federation (NEDCO) delegate body has approved increases in both membership dues and member equity.

The delegates, representing NEDCO's 3,300 cooperative members, has approved the co-op's first dues increase since the early 1970's and voted to review its dues position every two years. NEDCO dues had been 10 cents per hundredweight and were hiked by 5 cents per hundredweight.

President Edward McNamara explained that the increase was necessary to build operating revenues which had fallen behind because of the government's failure to increase the make allowance on milk going into manufacturing.

If the "make allowance" (what the plant is allowed for manufacturing) doesn't move up along with manufacturing costs, you soon reach a deficit position in your operations, he said. He added that the make allowance has been frozen at \$1.22 per hundredweight since 1979 while costs of manufacturing powder and butter have risen a minimum of 5 percent per year.

This has caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in plant losses over the 4-year span, said McNamara.

The delegates also voted to raise equity participation of 20 cents per hundredweight until a level of 40 cents is reached on an average year's milk production, payable at 5 cents per hundredweight. This level will be reviewed annually.

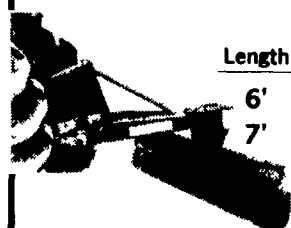
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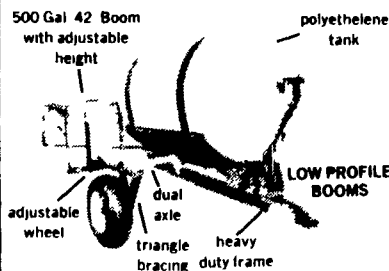
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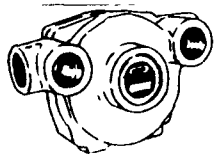


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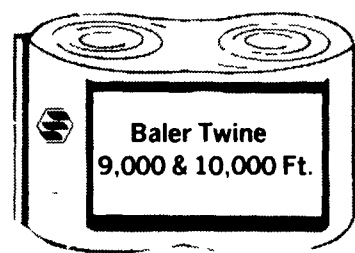
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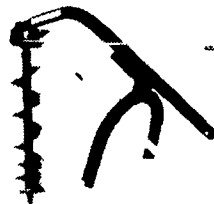
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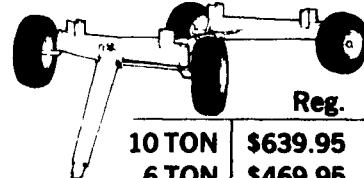


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