

Crawford Ag Forum gives Farm Bill input



Among the featured speakers at the recent Ag Forum in Crawford County are, from the left, Fred Lawyer, member of the legislative committee for the Pa. State Grange; Jack Post, president of the Crawford County Farmers Association; and Rep. Tom Ridge, of the 21st Congressional District.

BY NANCY KUNICK
Staff Correspondent

MEADVILLE — Interested farmers gathered at the Crawford County courthouse in Meadville in April 30 to express their views on the 1985 Farm Bill.

U.S. Congressman Tom Ridge from the 21st congressional district chaired the agricultural forum. Also present were his colleagues from the House Agriculture Committee, James Jeffords, Congressman from Vermont and Bob Smith, Congressman from Oregon. Also Charles Shaw of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture was on the panel to answer questions.

Local representatives of PFA, PFU, Grange and the Grape Growers Association made statements on behalf of their organizations.

Jack Rynd, a Crawford County dairyman, voiced ideas as president of the Crawford-Venango Chapter of Pa. Farmers Union. He feels there is a need for a food policy that is sensitive to the needs of the producers. He also pointed out that for dairy farmers, the cutback in milk production now in effect is reflecting an average loss

to NFU members of \$8,000 annually.

"It's creating a very real hardship to those who can not comply, leaving the farmer with little or no buying power," he said.

Jim Brown, President of the PFU, commended Ridge for a voting record that shows support for the family farm. He would like to see the government aid the young farmer to enable him to purchase a farm, another Homestead Act.

In his testimony Brown made the following recommendations for the Pennsylvania Farmers Union.

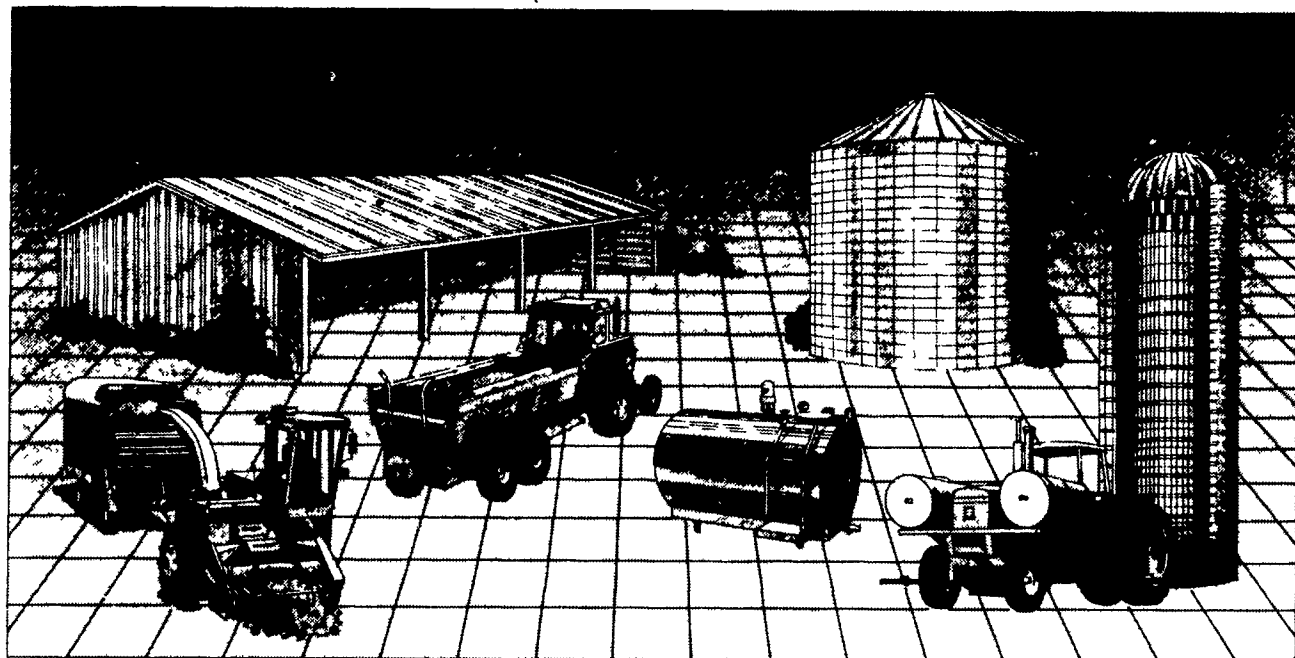
1. We recommend a base surplus production plan with 100% parity.
2. We recommend eliminating the pockets of non-federal order marketing areas.
3. We recommend that all mandatory supply management programs be adopted through referendums by producers.
4. We recommend that casein and caseinate powders be subject to quotas by the International Trade Commission under Section 22 and limit the annual import level by 7.5 billion pounds.
5. We recommend that the Secretary of Agriculture issue bonus food stamps designated specifically for real dairy products.
6. We recommend returning whole fluid milk to 3.5% butterfat.
7. We recommend a continuation of the farmer held reserve programs to insure an adequate supply to meet domestic and export commitments.
8. We recommend that imported mushrooms be subject to tariffs equal to the difference between the price of imported mushrooms and the domestic cost of the production (including labor and taxes) on mushrooms used for canning.
9. We recommend that imported mushrooms be subject to the same health, sanitation, pesticide and specie standards and requirements as domestic mushrooms.
10. We endorse the concept embodied in the Young Farmers Act of 1975. This Program would establish a federal corporation which would be funded to buy land from willing sellers and lease to qualified young farmers with an option to buy. Fees collected from the young farmers would eventually make the program self-sufficient. We believe this Program would stabilize land tenure and make it possible for young farmers to begin farming operations.

Fred Lawyer, spokesman for the Pa. Grange feels there should be more restriction on corporate farmers. He explained that "land ownership moves into fewer and fewer hands — many have gotten into agriculture as a tax shelter, producing more resulting in lower prices — hurting those that need to farm for a living."

Crawford County Farmers' Association President Jack Post feels that tax reform and interest rates need to be considered when looking at the 1985 Farm Bill. He would like to see a long range program flexible enough to adapt to industry changes. This seemed to be the consensus as the question and answer period unfolded. Farm organizations tended to agree on that point. Post would also like to see more emphasis put on research funding to utilize surpluses, such as those in the dairy industry.

Another possibility is to look to underprivileged countries as an outlet for surplus foods, Post added that these countries may even be willing to pay transport costs.

Following comments by Erie County grape grower George Scheiffert and by Cal Ernst, Crawford Co. farmer, the format



An idea to keep in mind...

- NEED A NEW BUILDING?
- A FEEDING OR OTHER SYSTEM?
- CROPS EQUIPMENT?
- LEASE IT THROUGH TELMARK®

It's not the ownership but the use of equipment that produces profits. And you can have that use now...by leasing through Telmark. A Telmark Agri-Lease® covers almost any type, make or model of durable equipment or farm machinery—new or used. For details, fill out and mail the coupon today to: Telmark, Box 4943, Syracuse, New York 13221.

Agri-Lease BY TELMARK®

AGRI-LEASE FAST ACTION INFORMATION REQUEST

Please have someone call me about the equipment listed below. I understand this request for information does not commit me in any way.

NAME (please print) _____

ADDRESS _____

TOWN _____ COUNTY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ BEST TIME TO CALL _____

EQUIPMENT WANTED _____