

Milk promoters

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The Dairy Promotion Board, established by a provision in the Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983, consists of dairy farmers nominated through certified dairy and farm organizations. The board will oversee a national advertising and promotion effort to

increase the consumption of dairy products, funded by the 15-cent per hundredweight assessment on all milk produced nationally.

Keith Eckel, who operates a 1,000-acre dairy, vegetable and cash crop farm in Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, said that the board needs to address itself to

promotional and product development programs to recapture the lost market share.

"If we can just return to the per capita consumption of milk that we had 10 years ago," Eckel said, "the dairy situation can be turned from the present 10 percent surplus to a two percent deficit."

Serving as PFA president since 1981 and on the board of directors since 1976, Eckel said that room

exists for new promotion programs. "We have some good programs in place that can use more funding, but there's also room for new and innovative advertising of milk products," he said.

In addition to his involvement in PFA, Eckel serves on the Pa. State Planning Board which advises the

governor on resource, economic and community issues. He was the past president of the Lackawanna County Cooperative Extension Association and one of the founders of the State Board of the Pa. Council of Cooperative Extension Associations. He has also been a director of the State Council of Farm Workers.

A resident of Hop Bottom, Susquehanna County, Earl Forwood said he feels very strongly that the dairy industry needs to promote its product. "We have to combat the bad press we've gotten from the Medical Society," Forwood said. "We have to let the consumer know that beneficial things come from dairy science."

Forwood, president of Eastern Milk Producers since October 1983, said that university research has shown milk to be beneficial in fighting calcium deficiencies and in lowering cholesterol levels. The message that needs to be sent to the public, Forwood said, is "milk is not only beneficial, but it is also a health food."

An active member of Eastern Milk Producers, Forwood has served as the association's secretary as well as a member of the Executive, Sales, Legislative, Milk Price Regulation and Unit by Unit committees. He is also a member of PFA, and serves as a director of the National Milk Producers Federation and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Northeastern Dairy Conference.

Marylander Walter Martz, of Frederick, Md., sees the role of the National Dairy Promotion Board as "one of sifting through the various programs to get the most promotion for the producer's dollars." This will be a task, Martz said, since the board has a short time to implement its programs.

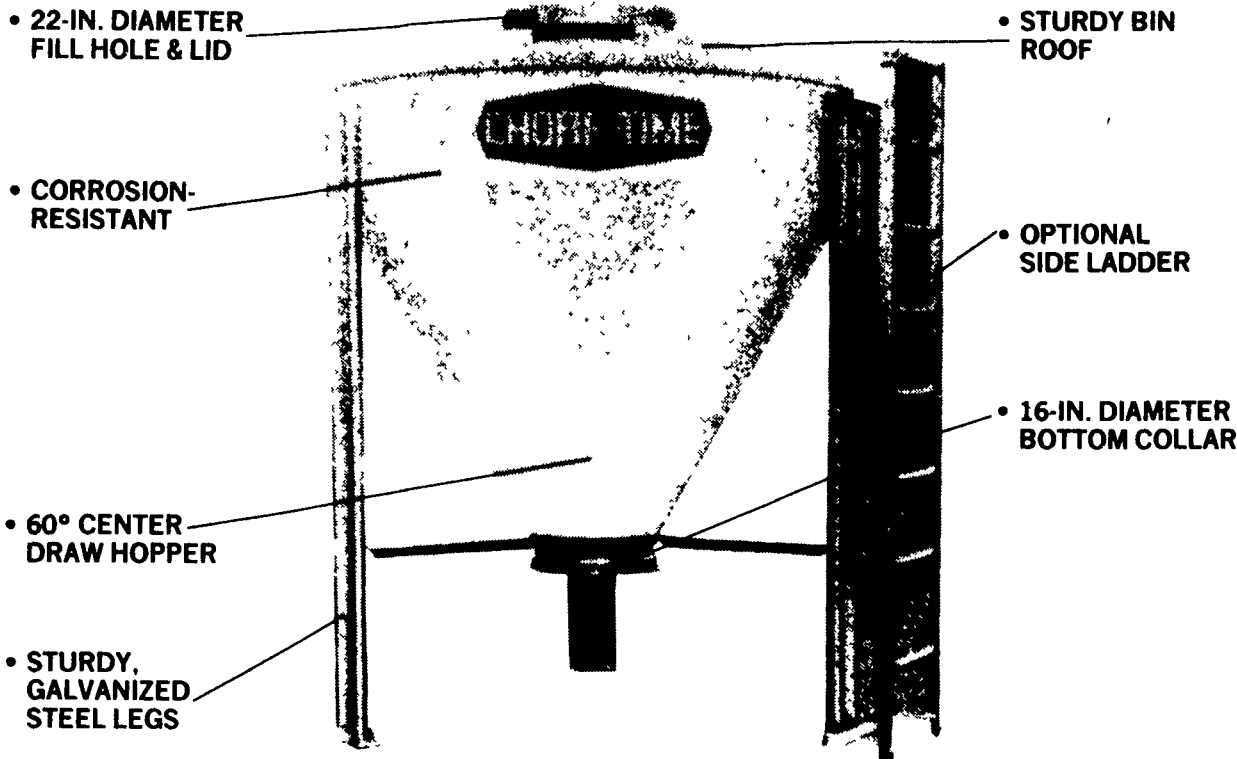
President of the Md. and Va. Milk Producers Association for 10 years, Martz said education is the key to increasing milk sales. "We need a real effective sale of products through education and through the Dairy Council and the media for a better response of milk sales," he said.

Active in dairy organizations, Martz is currently an executive committee member on the Board of Directors for the Advertisement and Promotion Agency of the Mid-Atlantic Milk Marketing Agency. He has served on the Board of Dairy Council of the Greater Metropolitan Area, Washington, D.C. as well as the United Dairy Industry Association board of directors.

The 36-member National Dairy Promotion Board will meet for its first time next Wednesday at the USDA in Washington, D.C.

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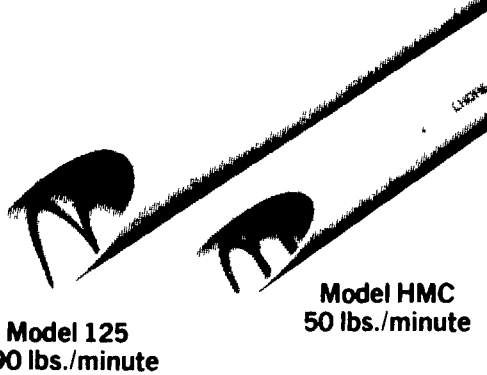
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