

NEDCO criticizes Block on dairy diversion end

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — NEDCO dairy executives have voiced dismay at Agricultural Secretary John Block's announced intention to discontinue the National Dairy Diversion Program, a farmer-funded program that pays farmers not to produce milk, which the cooperative feels has been doing the job in cutting heavy U.S. milk surpluses.

Block, in a recent public statement, said he will probably discontinue the diversion plan on its expiration date of April 1, 1985.

Edward McNamara, NEDCO

president, countered Block, stating the program is working well; that production is down in the northeast more than six percent compared to last year, and four percent nationally.

"For the past two months alone, government purchases of surplus butter, powder, and cheese have been reduced by 88 percent from the same period last year," he said. "John Block has been against this type of incentive payment program since NEDCO and the nation's dairy cooperatives attempted to first put it in place last

year."

McNamara said that NEDCO is pleased with the program. "I think it's working much better than we had expected," he said. "I know there is some dispute among dairymen who didn't sign up for the program concerning the government's 50 cents mandatory assessment. Remember, this assessment pays for administration of the diversion program," he said.

However, when you consider the other choice (Conable Bill) available at the time, you were

looking at a \$1.50 straight cut in the support price," he said. "I would say these farmers came out of it pretty well, even though they weren't in the program."

When asked what he and NEDCO feel will happen production-wise down the road, into spring, McNamara said that the nation could be facing two opposite situations:

"There could be a greater decline in production based on present trends. Dairy farmers income has been very depressed for the past three years, and loans have increased tremendously. I

don't know at what point farmers can keep on farming without a whole bunch of them going out of business all at once. If that happens, production will drop dramatically, and there will be no need for a diversion plan," he said.

"On the other hand, if, on April 1, the people who have participated in the program decide to go back into full production, and if there are as many heifers bred to freshen in the spring as everybody says there are, just the opposite could happen.

"We could have increased production back to levels somewhere in the range we were before," he said.

McNamara added that it is just too soon to know, therefore dairymen should be prepared with some sort of program containing a continued incentive to ease production. Then if milk flow looks like it will increase, "we should offer this program on at least a six-month basis," he said. "Drastic cuts in supports are harsh remedies and unworkable in emergency situations. Over the long run a dairy specific formula to adjust support levels would be an acceptable and workable solution."

Fulton Grange holds meeting

OAKRYN — Fulton Grange No. 66 held its regular meeting Monday at 8 p.m. in the Grange Hall, Oakryn. It was voted to extend an invitation to southern Lancaster Co. townships to use the Grange Hall for special blood donations for the Lancaster General Hospital.

Fulton Grange will sponsor Connie Bushong for the Miss Solanco Contest next Saturday. A \$25. donation was given in answer to an appeal. Clifford Holloway Jr., chairman of the tour to Old Bedford Village. Also Lecturer, Betty Wise, announced a walking tour to

see the gnomes in Colerain Township.

The Lecturer introduced David Ellenbery, Superintendent of Muddy Run Park, who spoke on the deer population in the 3,000-acre park and efforts to relieve the problem. All the fences around the perimeter have been lowered and only hunting with special permission will be allowed. Hunters are allowed only on antlerless deer, and hunting will be permitted only between Dec. 26 and 29. Only 50 hunters will be chosen each day in

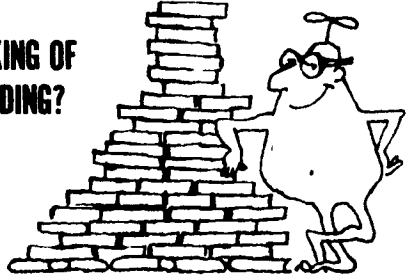
designated areas and will be selected on a lottery basis. Hunters must check in at the Environmental Studies Center each morning at 6 a.m. and must check out by 4 p.m. Hunting will be permitted only between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m.

To apply for the lottery, interested hunters must complete a postcard with name, address, telephone number, Pa. Hunting License number, muzzleloader State stamp number, preferred hunting days, and mail to

Philadelphia Electric Co., Muddy Run Recreation Park, R.D.3, Box 730, Holtwood, Pa. 17532. These cards must be received no later than 4 p.m., Dec. 3. Hunters selected will be notified.

Corn and Pie Night will be observed at the Nov. 26 meeting. Corn classes will be for best single ear and best 10 ear exhibit. Pie classes will be pumpkin and a double crust fruit pie. 25 or 50 year members will be honored. Dec. 10 will be a Christmas party with \$3.00 gift exchange.

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