

Lancaster Farming

VOL. 30 No. 23 Five Sections Lancaster Farming, Saturday, April 13, 1985 \$7.50 per Year

Pseudorabies: Serious or 'pseudo-problem'?

BY JACK HUBLEY

PENRYN — While members of a special Pseudorabies committee were introducing pork producers to their recently completed Pseudorabies virus (PRV) eradication plan, many producers were wrestling with a more fundamental question:

necessary?

The question surfaced repeatedly at a meeting held in Penryn on Thursday afternoon when Penn State Extension veterinarian Larry Hutchinson and Lancaster County Extension livestock agent Chet Hughes unveiled the program to county producers. Two other meetings

followed; one held at Lancaster's Farm and Home Center on Thursday night and a third held yesterday at the Earl Township building near New Holland.

Under the leadership of the Pa. Pork Producers Council, producers mobilized last November after the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Industry decided to refuse to issue permits to move infected herds after seven months. Thus the owner of swine testing positive for PRV had two choices: move the entire herd to slaughter within seven months—or eat them all himself.

This forced depopulation with no indemnity had proven to be a back breaker for a number of Lancaster County swine farmers in recent years. A producer-conducted survey of Lancaster County swine

farmers last fall showed that forced depopulation resulted in a \$565 loss per sow in farrow-to-finish operations and \$387 per sow in farrowing-only facilities.

So the PRV committee—with representation from the packing, marketing and producer sectors as well as agricultural organizations—claimed that a better plan could be hammered out. And the Bureau elected to give the committee until May 1, of this year to prove it.

What surfaced this week was the fourth draft of the committee's battle plan. Basically, the committee resolved to deal with positive herds in one of three ways: In low-incidence herds, infected pigs would be removed, with testing and removal repeated every 30 days until the herd was virus-free.

Option two involved vaccinating

the breeding herd and segregating replacement gilts. These gilts would be tested at about six months of age, with all positive gilts being removed. Retesting would occur 60 days later. This approach would be contingent on the producer having facilities to segregate herds, as well as the Bureau's willingness to permit the use of vaccine. At present, vaccines are prohibited in the state because any vaccinated hog will test positive. This makes vaccinated pigs indistinguishable from infected pigs, says Hutchinson.

A final option would be depopulation, but the plan states flatly that there shall be no forced depopulation without indemnity.

To help producers make the right choice, a team of consultants (Turn to Page A29)

Carpenter touts NFU's family-farm campaign

BY JACK HUBLEY

YORK — National Farmers Union president Cy Carpenter squared off against the Reagan administration's farm policy during a series of public meetings held throughout Pennsylvania and southern New York this week.

"Agriculture is your largest industry, and this administration is trying to destroy it," said the chief of this Minnesota-based general farm organization while addressing about 50 Dauphin, York and Lancaster County farmers in York on Monday.

Carpenter charged that the plight of the nation's farmers is worsening rapidly, with land value losses alone amounting to \$50 billion annually for the past three years.

"The proposal being offered by this administration is disaster, and there's no light at the end of the tunnel," Carpenter asserted, while reviewing the Department of Agriculture's market-oriented approach to agriculture.

Current administration philosophy calls for a gradual phase-out of target price supports, with commodity prices eventually tied directly to market demand.

Carpenter took aim at the recent elimination of the dairy diversion program. Though the program



Cy Carpenter

"needed some improvements", Carpenter pointed out that the producer-financed diversion program did lower dairy production. "In spite of this," said Carpenter, "this administration discontinued it, and offered nothing as a realistic replacement."

The NFU chief emphasized that such "callous indifference" to the plight of the American farmer can only lead to further exploitation of the farming community by "those

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Duncan elected chairman of Penna. Dairy Promotion Board

BY WENDY WEHR

HARRISBURG — Donald B. Duncan, an independent dairy producer from Robesonia, Berks County, has taken over as chairman of the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program Advisory Board. On Thursday, fellow board members elected Duncan to fill the vacated dairy board post of former Secretary of Agriculture Penrose Hallowell.

Following the election, Duncan immediately took up the chairman's gavel and presided as the dairy promotion board allocated nearly \$100,000 to fund a variety of advertising projects and events. Over the summer months the board will coordinate a dairy recipe contest, fund a variety of local promotion programs, and sponsor a "Dairy-ere in the



Donald B. Duncan

Delaware" inner tube float.

Duncan has proven to be an articulate spokesman at previous board meetings and is a dairy

promotion activist in his home county. As president of the Berks County Dairy Farmers Association, Duncan has led what he believes to be one of the finest dairy promotion programs in the state.

The Berks County group was one of the first to purchase a trailer, which they take to many fairs during the summer to sell milk shakes and ice cream and promote dairy products. Last year, \$4,500 in proceeds from the trailer sales were used to purchase "Make It Milk" ads on the radio, said Duncan.

Their county dairy promotion committee is also unique, explained the new board chairman, because they have a paid coordinator providing program support

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Eight horsepower 'snowplow'



If April showers bring May flowers, we can only hope that April snow showers yield the same results. Tuesday morning's unusual weather conditions failed to

keep at least one Lancaster County farmer from his field work. Some say this "warm snow" is better than fertilizer.