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Farm groups divided on ag secretary nomination

BY WENDY WEHR

HARRISBURG — Governor Dick Thornburgh drew harsh criticism from Pennsylvania Farmers' Association leaders this week for his nomination of Dr. Richard Grubb as state secretary of agriculture.

But other farm representatives, including the Pennsylvania State Grange, spoke up in favor of the nominee and publicly commended the Governor on his selection.

Thornburgh announced last week the nomination of Grubb, who is senior vice president for administration at The Pennsylvania State University, and holds two agriculture degrees from Penn State.

In denouncing the Grubb nomination, PFA president Keith Eckel said, "There are many qualified candidates with strong agricultural backgrounds who would better represent the agricultural community."

When questioned about his objections to the Grubb nomination, Eckel stated that the secretary of agriculture should be a person who is currently active in production agriculture, who knows the issues affecting agriculture today, and who has a working knowledge of the state's department of agriculture.

The secretary of agriculture, said Eckel, "must be a strong spokesman for the farmers' needs who can argue ably for the farmers' position. I don't believe this

gentleman can do that." Response from the governor's press office to the PFA objections was candid. Press officer Michael Moyle stated that the criticism from the farm community is relatively limited.

Although Harrisburg-based PFA leaders were voicing their criticisms, said Moyle, PFA members in other parts of the state and representatives from other farm organizations have indicated that the Grubb nomination was a fine choice which they can support.

Among the state's other general farm organizations, the Pennsylvania State Grange has publicly praised Thornburgh for the

nomination. Grange Master Charles Wismer sent a note to Governor Thornburgh this week, commending him for the selection of the Penn State administrator for the agriculture post.

Having worked with Grubb on Penn State's board of trustees, Wismer said he has found the nominee to be a capable administrator. Wismer believes Grubb's farm background and his lack of association with any particular farm group will allow him to work aggressively for agriculture, working fairly with all parties involved.

Grange spokesperson Linda (Turn to Page A25)

U.S. Milk production climbs 3% in April

BY JAMES H. EVERHART

WASHINGTON — It's official. Milk production leaped almost three percent in April, virtually erasing the gains made during the 15-month dairy diversion program that ended March 31.

USDA's figures for April, the first non-diversion month since December 1983, jumped 2.9 percent over April 1984 figures, to 12 billion pounds.

Most of the increase resulted from a rise in production per cow, which climbed more than two percent to 1,101 pounds.

Cow numbers, on the other hand, grew more slowly, increasing a little less than one percent, to 10,903,000, or 97,000 more cows than in April 1984.

The cow number figure, however, approaches the February 1984 total of 10,910,000, recorded during the second month of the diversion program.

Pennsylvania's figures closely paralleled the national totals, increasing about 3.1 percent over

April 1984 levels. However, cow numbers grew more rapidly than production per cow, increasing 20,000 cows to 738,000. Production per cow was up five pounds, to 1,075 pounds.

New York followed a similar pattern, recording a 1.6 percent production rise, to 1.014 billion pounds. The entire increase could be traced to an increase of 15,000 in cow numbers, to 935,000. Production per cow remained steady at 1,085 pounds.

Maryland recorded a whopping 10-percent jump in production to 143 million pounds, with cow numbers climbing from 120,000 to 122,000, and production per cow jumping from 1,080 to 1,175 pounds in April 1984.

Similar figures were recorded in Federal Order No. 4 (Middle Atlantic area), where production increased 5.6 percent to 527 million pounds in April.

April figures for Order No. 2 and for Delaware and New Jersey were not available at press time.



Motorists in Pennsylvania and New Jersey will be able to spot ADA/DA's health kick billboards that are part of an outdoor campaign.

ADA/DC promotions target point of purchase

BY SUZANNE KEENE

WILLIAMSPORT — The American Dairy Association and Dairy Council are gearing up for summer milk promotion with several programs aimed at hitting the consumer where it counts — at the grocery store where he makes his final decision.

"Have a Dairy Good Summer" and "Ice Cream the Beautiful" promotions featuring colorful photos of summer dairy foods will be placed in 2,000 supermarkets and convenience stores in ADA's marketing area, Dairy Marketing

Specialist Pret Goslee announced at a meeting of ADA's executive board this week.

The materials are presented in such "a tempting manner" that it is easy to convince merchandizers and purchasing agents to use them, he reported.

To assure that the materials will stay up in participating stores at least through July 15, ADA/DC has developed a contest. Each promotion kit contains a contest entry form that the store can enter in the drawing.

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Congressional committee hears local testimony on Farm Bill

BY JAMES H. EVERHART

WESTMINSTER, MD — A Congressional subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee heard 29 witnesses from Maryland and Pennsylvania address credit and conservation issues in a formal committee hearing Monday at the Carroll County Agricultural Center here.

The Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit and Rural Development convened the meeting at the request of Congresswoman Beverly Byron, whose district includes this pastoral community.

And though the voices were often different and the interests, varied, there was surprising agreement both on the scope of problems and the range of solutions.

Virtually all the participants, including the Congressional representatives, wanted a balanced federal budget. Most thought federal programs were often counter-productive.

And there was widespread agreement that Soil Conservation

programs were essential to the continued health and safety of agriculture in general and the rural community in particular.

Witnesses included federal officials like G. Wallace "Pat" Clark, director of the Farmers Home Administration in Maryland and Delaware and Pearl S. Reed, State Conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in College Park, MD.

Maryland Agriculture Secretary Wayne A. Cawley Jr. also gave testimony, along with officials of the state Soil Conservation Committee and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

The financial sector was represented by bankers from Maryland National, York Bank and Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore. Maryland Farm Bureau, Maryland Grange, the Pennsylvania Farmers Union and the Pennsylvania Farmers Association all sent representatives.

And farmers like Marlin Hoff of New Windsor, MD, and York

Countians Ralph McGregor, Geary Huntsberger and Paul McPherson also had their say.

Though there was probably no new ground covered, Congressional staffers were impressed with the quality of the testimony.

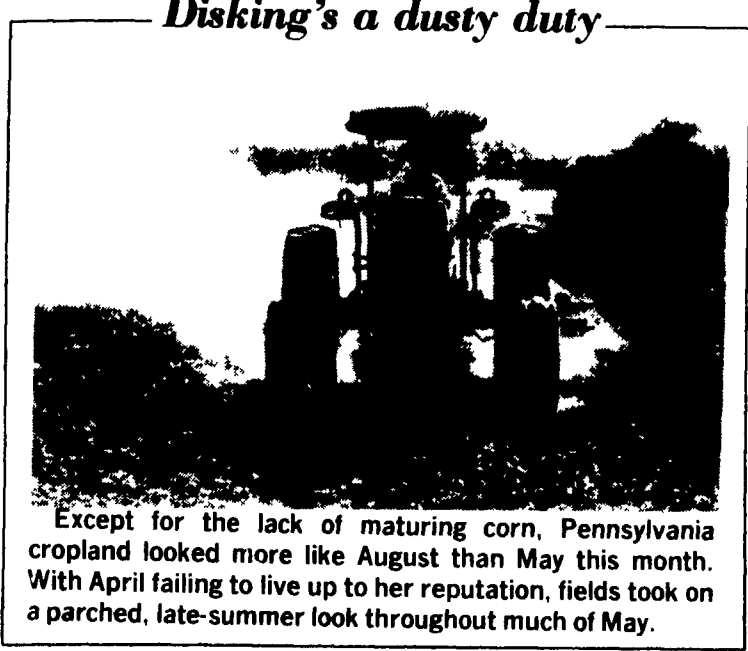
"It's true, we've probably had about 15 hearings like this around the country," said Jim Johnson, subcommittee staffer. "But it's the first opportunity we've had to get out in the country since the budget compromise package was adopted by the Senate."

Even though they didn't get the first word on the subject, the local witnesses may have had one of the last — The Senate has already begun to draft its version of the 1985 Farm Bill, and the House is expected to follow fairly soon.

On the credit issue, most testimony indicated that local credit problems are not as severe as those reported in other areas of the country.

"But if commodity prices con-

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Except for the lack of maturing corn, Pennsylvania cropland looked more like August than May this month. With April failing to live up to her reputation, fields took on a parched, late-summer look throughout much of May.