

Lancaster Farming



Weeds crowd the outside yard, but there's still enough potential inside the Clover Meat Packing plant to make a co-op takeover worthwhile, organizers believe

Producers' co-op eyes old Clover Packing

BY MARGIE FUSCO
Staff Correspondent
SELINGSGROVE — Birth is seldom easy. Whether it's babies or calves or co-ops, there are bound to be co-ops, there are bound to be co-ops. That's what 65 farmers learned when they gathered on May 16 at the Dutch Pantry in Hummel's Wharf, Snyder County, to start a cooperative beef marketing program.
In autumn 1984, a group of cattle producers and agricultural businessmen met in the same room to talk about improving the beef market in Pennsylvania. They formed the Beef Marketing Development Committee (BMDC), an ad hoc group committed to investing in beef marketing. With support from PACMA, the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association marketing cooperative, BMDC

obtained the option to purchase the abandoned Clover Packing Plant in Selingsgrove.
With the first groundwork laid, BMDC was ready to face other growers at this public meeting, to invite them to join in a cooperative association to purchase the plant, renovate it, and go into operation marketing members' beef.
The attendees came from a corridor the length of central Pennsylvania, a strip of 14 counties from Bradford to Cumberland. They included beef, veal, dairy, and even sheep growers from operations of all sizes.
The evening began at the plant site, off Route 204. The plant had been closed since 1980, when its owner went bankrupt. As the farmers toured the rooms and followed the meat processing step

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USDA adopts export plan with incentive provision

BY JAMES H. EVERHART
WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Agriculture has adopted a bonus-incentive plan to boost agricultural exports in the face of increasing foreign competition.
The new trade program, modeled closely after a Farm Bureau "Bonus Incentive Plan" announced almost two months ago, was unveiled as Congressional committees took action on similar programs of their own.
USDA's plan would use \$2 billion worth of Commodity Credit Corporation inventories as bonuses for sales generated in specific world markets through fiscal 1988. Specific details are not expected to be released until June 1.

USDA had first proposed using the plan specifically to counter European community subsidies that give those countries a competitive advantage in selling agricultural commodities worldwide.
Later this week, however, USDA officials privately agreed to use the bonus plan to regain worldwide markets lost in the last few years because of unfair subsidies or the strength of the U.S. dollar.
The proposal is quite similar to the Farm Bureau's BICEP plan announced in late March. And though the organization indicated that it would like to reserve judgement on the package until the specifics are known, spokesmen obviously were pleased that the administration had pursued the idea.

"We're pretty happy with it," said Farm Bureau News Service Director Bill Eckmann. "The concept is there."
Eckmann said his organization is continuing to meet with USDA and Congressional leaders to shape the specifics of the proposal.
Wallace Lindell, information director for the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, admitted

that the administration had accepted a plan similar to the one proposed by the Farm Bureau, but noted that similar incentive ideas had been tried in the past, most recently in a 1983 wheat flour sale to Egypt.
He did admit, however, that the national farm organization played an important role in advancing the current idea, adding, "maybe the Farm Bureau first articulated it."
In announcing the administration plan, Agriculture Secretary John Block noted that the incentive initiatives should be geared to enhancing sales in the international market, and must be used in markets which have been taken over by competing nations, using unfair trade practices.

"We are not going to use a shotgun approach with our plan by spreading our bonus commodities across the board in the world market," Block said. "Instead, we will be taking careful aim, continuously targeting areas over the next three years where we can do the most good for our farmers."
"This administration remains fully committed to market-oriented international trade policies. Until our agricultural

policies allow us to be competitive and until a fair trade environment exists around the world, we will pursue this and other initiatives."

Although the department feels it has existing statutory authority to implement the plan, it reportedly would like to have permanent legislative blessing for the program included in the Omnibus Farm Bill now before Congress.

Committees in both the House and Senate reviewed export incentives as part of their general deliberations on the Farm Bill.

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry reported two bills to increase the competitiveness of U.S. agricultural exports.

The Committee ordered reported S. 721, has amended, a bill to exempt certain U.S. Department of Agriculture export programs from cargo preference requirements. The bill essentially returns cargo preference practices to the same status prior to the decision of a federal court in February which made the Department's blended credit program subject to cargo preference requirements

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Dairy Month coverage to begin next week

LANCASTER — Lancaster Farming will honor the dairy industry with its annual Dairy Month coverage which begins in next week's edition.
This newspaper's editorial staff has devoted extensive amounts of time and effort in preparing this review, which will continue throughout the five editions in June.
Coverage will include com-

prehensive reviews of virtually every aspect of dairying — from inputs, feed and finance to production, processing, housing and promotion.

There will also be interviews with key officials and accounts of the latest developments in many important areas of research.

Watch for next week's edition for the beginning of our in-depth account of the dairy industry.

INSIDE this week's Lancaster Farming



Roger and Ellen Sue Spivack have started a new agricultural business right in downtown Lewisburg. For more on their Deep Roots operation, turn to page B18.



Furmans Foods, Inc., in Northumberland has made its way in the world by treating processors fairly -- and by promoting Pennsylvania ag products. For more on this interesting operation, turn to A18-A19.