

Over-order pricing campaign continues in Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — Charles Wismer, Master of the Pennsylvania State Grange and Chester L. Reed, State Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Farmers Union have announced that they are going to resume their efforts in signing independent dairy farmers

into the Regional Cooperative Marketing Agency (RCMA).

During the month of March, the two general farm organizations sponsored over 20 informational meetings for dairy farmers across Pennsylvania

The meetings centered around a full explanation of RCMA including the desirability of the bargaining agency to establish over-order prices on Class 1 milk in the eastern part of the United States.

Reed stated, "Our efforts to sign the independent dairy farmers were placed on hold the last month because of Eastern Milk Producers' failure to join RCMA. However, during the past week, Eastern has made formal application for membership, which now means that all the major milk cooperatives in Federal Orders #1 and #2 will be members of RCMA."

Wismer stated, "As a result of the previous informational meetings, we have nearly 20 counties organized with dairy farmers ready to aid us in signing the independent dairy farmers."

Wismer further explained that the by-laws of RCMA regarding finances have been modified, "to make the bargaining agency even more acceptable to all dairy farmers."

Both Wismer and Reed are strong supporters of RCMA's attempt to negotiate over-order prices in Class 1 milk. They point out that prices paid to dairy farmers in Federal Order #2 (New York/New Jersey market) have already dropped \$1.15 per hundred weight since January and will drop considerably more before the end of 1985.

Arden Tewksbury, a leader in the RCMA movement said, "We really had the momentum going during March and early April. We had support from many farm groups, county agents, news media, and most importantly, many dairy farmers. Now with Eastern involved, it should increase our ability to sign up the independent dairy farmers."

RCMA was established in the early 1970's, and in 18 months collected over \$20 million for dairy farmers in New England and the western part of New York state.

Now with declining prices paid to area dairy farmers during 1985 and with near disastrous prices estimated for the near future, it is all the more important for RCMA to become successful in negotiating for dairy farmers.

Meetings are already planned for several counties according to Wismer and Reed, and they intend to intensify their efforts during the up-coming weeks.

Any dairy farmer or farm organization willing to help with the project, should contact the Pennsylvania Farmers Union at 1/800/932-4629 or the Pennsylvania State Grange at 1/800/242-9661.

First U.S. Dairy Forum stimulates discussion

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Lively and spirited debates and forthright discussions were characteristic of the two-and-a-half-day U.S. Dairy Forum — a first-of-its-kind conclave for 275 leaders from all facets of the dairy industry — held outside of Tampa, Florida, early this month.

In response to requests for a 1986 forum for discussion, deliberation and debate, Dairy Forum chairman John F. Speer, President of the Forum's sponsoring organizations, the Milk Industry Foundation and the International Association of Ice Cream Manufacturers, reiterated the need for a platform upon which to express differing viewpoints and further clarify positions.

"We are anxiously planning to continue looking at these 'issues of the day' from, at the minimum, two sides," noted Speer. "The overwhelming success of this year's Forum, as expressed by participants, strongly supports the necessity of and the good which

stems from this type of dialogue."

The Forum addressed such diverse areas as dairy specific vs. flexible price supports, Class I differentials, impacts of supply controls on production, probable future regions of greatest and least milk supply, marketing barriers imposed by regulations, bovine hormones and embryo transplants and their effects on current national dairy policy, National Dairy Board promotional programs, casein imports and SNF levels in milks.

A Saturday morning breakfast session with Secretary of Agriculture Block headlined the closing day, followed by an in-

sightful discussion of world and domestic agricultural priorities moderated by ABC News correspondent Sander Vanocur. Panelists Congressman E. "Kika" de la Garza (D-TX), Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, Congressman Arland Stangeland (R-MN), member of the Committee on Agriculture and Secretary Block offered critical comments on world trade and export policies, domestic support levels, and the future of our national dairy industry.

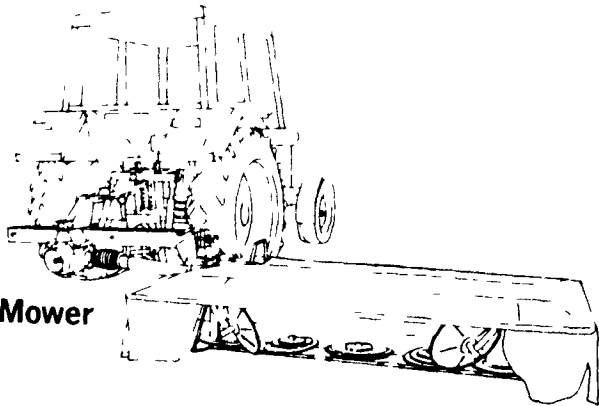
Dates and locations of the spring 1986 U.S. Dairy Forum will be released shortly. Several hundred independent producers, cooperative leaders and processing and manufacturing CEO's are expected to attend.



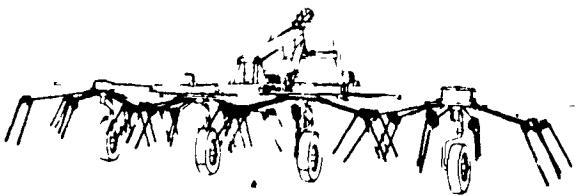
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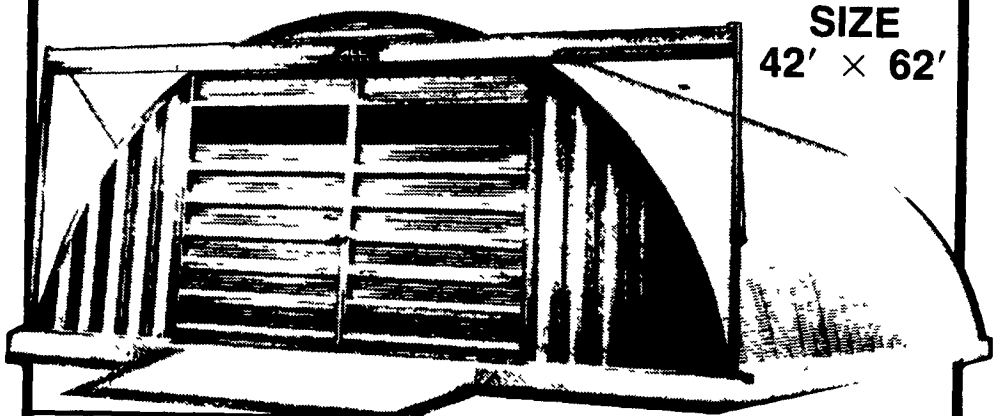
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