

Grain exec. says Senate is eyeing "market loans"

LANCASTER — A key executive in the National Feed and Grain Association told a gathering of 300 ag industry leaders here Monday that the Senate has also accepted the marketing loan concept recently adopted by a House subcommittee.

"There appears to be momentum in the Senate for the 'marketing loan' concept," said Kendall Keith, vice president and secretary-treasurer of the grain industry group. "But exactly what this marketing loans concept is has yet to be defined by the Senate."

A House subcommittee has already endorsed the concept, he added, and a number of groups, including growers and cooperative association, are strongly in favor.

Specific areas of potential disagreement, he noted, include restrictions on total loans made to individual producers and provisions to make the loans recourse or non-recourse.

The House version, he said, has endorsed the plan outlined by Rep. Arlan Strangeland of Minnesota. It includes the following provisions:

- Loans will be set at current levels (\$3.30 for wheat and \$2.55 for corn), with five-percent reductions permitted annually.
- Loans will be made on the full amount of production, but will be fully recourse, or paid back at the original level or the market price, whichever is lower.
- Target prices will be set at \$4.75 for wheat and \$3.25 for corn.
- Target price deficiency payments would be made on 50 percent of production base, up to a limit of \$50,000 per producer.

The main attractiveness of the proposal, Keith said, is that it "ensures that grain will come to market rather than end up in government stocks"

It would also minimize over-

production problems, he added, in that "producers would not be required to plant more than 50 percent of production base in order to receive full deficiency payments."

The subcommittee, he added, is also considering optional mandatory programs that would permit producers to vote on a referendum to approve marketing and production quotas.

"With congressional elections coming up next year, the House would very much like to put the land decisions on policy back into the farmer's lap," Keith said.

Congressional action on the Farm Bill, he added, will also be strongly influenced by the success of the new "export enhancement program" now being implemented by USDA.

Three problems have already developed from the program, he said:

- Availability of the surplus crops may simply make prices go lower.
- Competing exporters may simply go to other markets traditionally served by the U.S.
- Other major markets, like the Soviet Union, may want similar concessions.

In addition, he added, the \$2 billion allocated to the program is "clearly not enough."

"Also is the problem of program implementation," he said. "Some believe that it will be very difficult to administer and create all sorts of international trade tensions

'Chasing smokestacks' is not economic progress

PITTSBURGH, Pa — Rural development officials have stopped "chasing smokestacks" and started encouraging local entrepreneurship with very positive results, the federal government's rural development policy director said today.

Willard "Bill" Phillips Jr., told the National Association of Regional Councils meeting here that this trend toward "home grown enterprise" is generating "genuine economic progress, not just economic piracy."

"Moving a plant from one place to another—chasing smokestacks—helps one community, hurts another, and profits the overall economy not at all," Phillips said. "Creating new products, new businesses, whole new industries from the resources in your own back yard is the way to true progress and the wave of the future in economic development."

"Through technology transfer grants, enterprise zones, venture

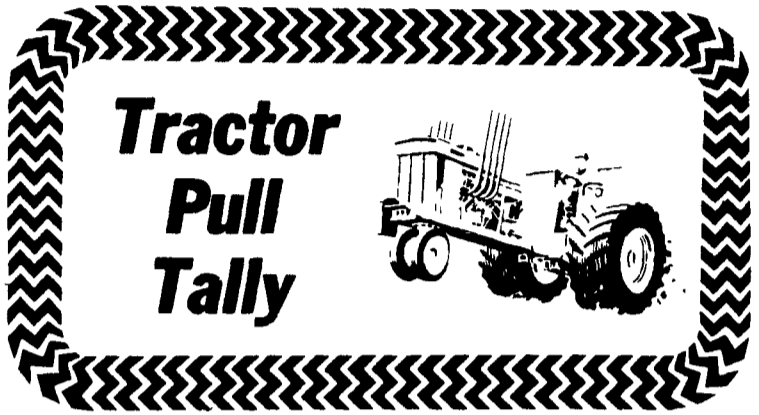
capital expansion, high technology corridors and creative tax incentives, local and state governments are becoming more entrepreneurial and innovative than ever before," he said, citing as evidence Pennsylvania's Ben Franklin Partnership Program which has attracted \$115 million in high technology investments in the past two years.

Phillips also cited the Main Street community revitalization program now operating in 14 states, the "business incubator" program which reduces start-up costs and provides management assistance for businesses, and "retention and expansion"

programs in which local companies are "cherished and nourished, not ignored and starved."

All of these programs, Phillips said, are examples of the "flexibility, dynamism and innovation which characterize rural development today and which are yielding very positive results."

Regional authorities can help provide the "missing link of coordination" in these efforts, he said. "Far from outliving your usefulness, perhaps it was not until today that your greatest opportunity for service presented itself," Phillips told the regional officials.



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