

Iowa farmer chosen for Farm Bureau presidency

ATLANTA, GA - Dean Kleckner, the president of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation was elected today as the 10th president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. South Carolina Farm Bureau President Harry Bell was selected as the federation's vice president.

Kleckner, 53, raises hogs, corn and soybeans on 550 acres in Rudd, Iowa. He was elected to head the Iowa Farm Bureau in 1975, and has served on the AFBF board since 1976. He succeeds Robert Delano, who served six years as head of the national federation. Bell, who succeeds Michigan Farm Bureau Federation President Elton Smith, farms 1,450 acres in Ward, S.C., raising cotton, soybeans, grains, cattle and timber.

At a news conference, Kleckner was asked several times about current conditions in agriculture. "I'm sensitive to the fact that agriculture in general is in a depressed state," he said, adding that he hopes the worst is over but doesn't see a quick turnaround.

"Everything we are going to do is going to be slanted toward improving net farm income," said Kleckner. He said one answer is more exports and he indicated that Farm Bureau will continue to look at other ideas to achieve a turnaround in the industry.

Another priority, Kleckner said, will be in the credit area, and he said he expects additional measures to be considered in Congress to help farmers and their lenders.

Kleckner stressed that he favors a market-based, rather than government-directed, system of agriculture, and he said it would be dangerous to conclude that American farmers cannot be competitive in world markets.

"We have simply got to a better job in the export market," he said.

With the convention coming shortly after enactment of the 1985 farm bill, the 200 voting delegates turned their attention to other national issues.

Most prominent among the more than 200 considered was tax reform legislation, which is one-half the way through Congress and will be considered this year in the Senate.

The delegates endorsed a tax reform package that would repeal the investment tax credit, saying the credit and other tax breaks hurt agriculture because they encourage overproduction of many commodities and pull down prices.

In addition, the tax reform

package ratified by the delegates would treat proceeds from livestock sales as ordinary income instead of as capital gains. The tax reform proposals were similar to those contained in an AFBF tax reform study.

On the issue of possible tax increase to slice the federal deficit, the delegates reaffirmed their long-held stance against new or additional levies.

Also debated was the problem of grain quality, which foreign buyers have complained about in recent years. The delegates urged that grain grade standards be improved to "give assurance that we will provide clean...grains for our customers at home and abroad."

Addressing an issue in last year's farm bill debate, the delegates changed the federation's position on commodity promotion programs. They said that such programs should feature an initial referendum. In instances where mandatory participation is required the delegates said a referendum should be held at least every five years to reaffirm checkoff programs. Previous policy said that producers should be given the option of obtaining refunds if they did not want to participate.

The delegates rejected two proposals of note. They voted against a proposal calling for a national tax on sales of food with the revenues earmarked for helping troubled farmers.

Also, the delegates turned down a proposal to establish a national political action committee for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Five new members were elected to the federation's board of

directors: Keith Eckel, president of the Pennsylvania Farmer's Association, and John Tarburton, president of the Delaware Farm Bureau, both representing the Northeast region; Cecil Miller, president of the Arizona Farm Bureau, representing the Western region; Carl Loop, president of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation, representing the Southern region; and Merlyn Lokensgard, president of the Minnesota Farm Bureau

representing the Midwest.

Re-elected to the AFBF board were C.R. Johnston, Missouri; John White Jr., Illinois; and Doyle Rahjes, Kansas, representing the Midwest; James Graugnard, Louisiana; Nicky Hargrove, Arkansas; James Lockett, Oklahoma; S.T. Moore, Virginia; and S.M. True, Texas, representing the South. All those elected to the board will serve two-year

terms except for True and Lokensgard, who will serve one year.

Representing the AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher advisory committee on the board is Mark Darrington, of Delco, Idaho.

Elected to the AFB Women's Committee were Marilyn Campbell, of New Hampshire; Maxine Bell, Idaho; Ailene Miller, Illinois; Carolyn Hegel, Indiana; and Ella Mae Carroll, Arkansas.

Eckel elected to AFBF board

CAMP HILL - Voting Delegates at the 67th annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation have elected Keith W. Eckel of Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, to the Board of Directors of the nation's largest general farm organization. American Farm Bureau represents over 3.3 million farmers and ranchers throughout the United States. American Farm Bureau delegates met in Atlanta, GA, Jan. 12 - 16, to elect leaders and adopt policies on national farm issues.

Eckel, is a full-time farmer and president of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) which is affiliated with American Farm Bureau. Eckel operates a dairy and vegetable farm in partnership with his father, Fred, and his brother, Doug. The Eckels have a registered Holstein dairy herd of 165 cows. They also grow and pack 300 acres of mature green tomatoes.

The entire farm operation consists of more than 1,000 acres and also includes 500 acres of field corn, 125 acres of alfalfa, 25 acres of sweet corn, and 150 acres of

wheat which is rotated with tomatoes. The Eckels have received the Pennsylvania Master Farmer Award presented by the Pennsylvania State University.

Eckel has been president of PFA since 1981. He heads a state-wide, voluntary farm organization which represents 23,300 farm families in 54 county associations.

Commenting on his election, Eckel said, "American Farm Bureau is the most powerful and influential farm organization in the country. The election of a farmer from Pennsylvania gives our state and the entire northeast agricultural community a strong voice in carrying out the wishes of our members on a national scale."

Franklin Co. Holstein Club meets

KAUFFMAN STATION - The Franklin County Holstein Club held their annual meeting and awards banquet on January 21, 1986 at the Kauffman Community Center.

State youth winners for milk and fat production were: two year old - Scott Cordell, Chambersburg; three year old - Steve Ecksteine, Mercersburg; four year old - Rodney Meyers, Chambersburg; five year old - Mike Cordell, Chambersburg.

Placques were presented to the high registered cows in milk and fat production. Winning the award for milk production was Ray and

Stewart Hollenshead, Mercersburg, for the record of 31,132 M in 305 days. The winner for fat production was Mark Meyers, Greencastle, with a record of 1225 F in 305 days.

Receiving the All Pennsylvania Award were the following herd owners: Alvin Meyers, Chambersburg; James Nina Burdette, Mercersburg; and C. Richard and Georgianna Locke, Mercersburg.

Directors named to three year terms are: Brad Beidel, Newburg; Roy Cordell, Chambersburg; J. Robert Meyers Jr., St. Thomas; and Jaye Young, Greencastle.

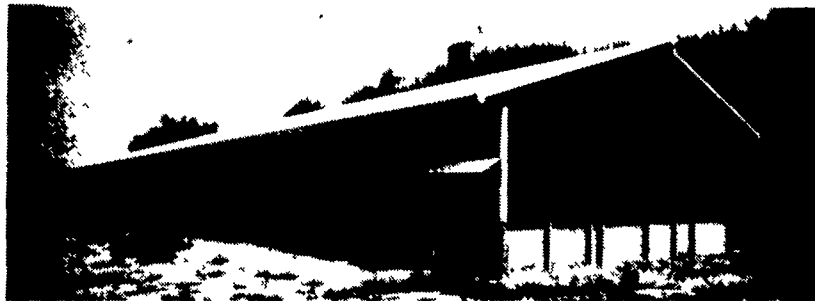
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