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Herd buyout signups in Northeast to total 3,000?

BY MARTHA J. GEHRINGER
SMOKETOWN — An Agway dairy expert told a group of Lancaster County dairymen this week that he expects more than 3,000 dairy farmers in the Northeast to sign up for the recently enacted whole herd buyout program.

Dr. Lew S. Mix, Director, Farm Management Research and Development, speaking to the Agway Dairy Meeting here, told the group his reading of the just-announced program regulations indicates "1986 will not be a good year for dairymen."

"The annual dropout rate will probably increase from two to three percent to four to five percent," Mix told the group. "Lower milk prices and higher expenses will decrease net farm cash flow."

Mix answered questions about the new USDA regulations on the herd buyout program from the 300 dairymen in attendance.

The regs were provided to state and federal officials in meetings across the country earlier in the week. County extension agents across the country were expected to receive their copies of the regulations by week's end.

Producers should not base their bid decisions on this preliminary information, Mix said, but should wait until final details are available from county extension agents.

As of Monday, he said, the

following are the guidelines of how the program will be administered.

The official bid signup period is February 10 through March 7. The Extension Service will conduct a

series of educational meetings early in the signup period to assist producers with calculating their break-even points.

Producers will submit a hun-

dredweight for milk price based on their own break even point and desired returns. Dr. Mix estimates "As many as 1800 Northeastern herds will sign up for 1986 and

another 1550 herds in 1987.

The producer must submit monthly records of his milk marketings from July, 1984 through December, 1985. The base period a producer uses will be the lesser of the milk marketings for either 12-month period from July 1, 1984 to June 30, 1985, or January 1, 1985 to December 31, 1985.

There will be three bid periods during this program. A producer may enter bids for one or more of the periods which run from April 1, 1986 to August 31, 1986, September 1, 1986 to February 28, 1987, and March 1, 1987 to August 31, 1987.

The lowest bids for each period will be accepted first. The new

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PYFA names Outstanding Young Farmers



The Pennsylvania Young Farmers Association honored two farm couples with Outstanding Young Farmer Awards during their annual convention in Grantville this week. Harry and Ella Mae Wasson, left, of Centre Hall, won in the Over 30 category, while Jeffrey Hillegass, right, and his wife, Nancy, (not pictured) of Berlin, were the Under 30 winners. Turn to page A37 for more on the winners.

Tell us your view on herd buyout

Will the whole herd buyout plan work? Will there be a lot of cheating? How will it effect milk production figures?

Lancaster Farming would like to give its readers a chance to respond to those questions. We've compiled a survey questionnaire which appears today on page A23.

To participate, simply fill out and return before Feb. 17. Results will be published in our Feb 22 edition

PDA imposes restrictions on poultry, egg movement

BY JACK HUBLEY

HARRISBURG — After more than a month of fighting a running battle with avian influenza, the Department of Agriculture has invoked restrictions on the movement of eggs and poultry.

In a quarantine order issued Wednesday, Secretary of Agriculture Richard Grubb said that the regulations would include the following:

- A ban on transportation to and sales of poultry at Pennsylvania livestock auctions.
- A ban on transportation of live poultry to poultry shows, fairs and exhibitions.
- Strict sanitary measures on trucks, coops, cages, crates and other poultry equipment moving to or from farms.
- Isolation of premises with suspected or confirmed cases of avian influenza.
- Measures governing release from

special quarantine order to insure that infected and exposed birds are depopulated, premises cleaned and disinfected and held vacant for 30 days.

- Restrictions on movement of poultry into interstate commerce.
- Expansion of the already extensive Pennsylvania monitoring and surveillance program throughout the state to detect the presence of avian influenza.
- Restrictions on the importation of live poultry and eggs into Pennsylvania by states where avian flu currently exists.

A detailed explanation of the regulations, which took effect Feb. 5, can be found on page A39.

New cases of the H5N2 virus have continued to crop up since the first infected flock was uncovered in Snyder County on Dec. 30. The latest infection involves a 9,600-bird layer flock located in Northumberland County near the town

of Northumberland. The flock was confirmed on Wednesday and will be depopulated as soon as possible, according to Department of Agriculture spokesmen.

Testifying before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Agriculture and Related Agencies this week, State Secretary of Agriculture Richard Grubb stated that the problem may be bigger than individual states can handle. Despite present budgetary restraints, said Grubb, "financial

assistance to affected states, through reallocation of existing resources, may be necessary should this outbreak spread, in order to protect our national poultry market. It is clear that we are dealing with a serious problem that transcends any one individual state."

Thus far the current flu infection has resulted in the depopulation of nearly 250,000 broilers, layers and turkeys at eight locations in Snyder, Fulton, Schuylkill and

Northumberland counties.

Other states suffering from outbreaks include Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York.

In an effort to checkmate the disease's possible move to Delmarva's extensive broiler industry, the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. has elected to depopulate 200,000 birds after it was learned that the flocks had been exposed to poultry hauling trucks that had come in contact

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What's the ag impact of Gramm-Rudman?

BY JAMES H. EVERHART

WASHINGTON — The shock waves of Gramm-Rudman reverberate along the Potomac, as federal agencies scramble to cope with the budget-cutting legislation that seems destined to impose a new set of realities on the nation's government.

Preliminary plans indicate the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be forced to reduce its spending by \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 1986, which ends Sept. 30.

Most of the cuts will come in commodity support programs, a USDA official told a Congressional committee last week.

"About \$824 million of the reduction is to be made in crop year 1986 support programs under the new Farm Bill," USDA Budget Officer Stephen B. Dewhurst told

the House Agriculture Committee.

Crop support programs will bear much of the budget-cutting burden because almost half of USDA's 1986 spending allocation is exempt from Gramm-Rudman, Dewhurst said. Exempt programs include Food Stamps, Child Nutrition and the Women, Infants Children program.

Many details of the cost-cutting measures have not been resolved, Dewhurst told the committee, though the legislation clearly indicates that necessary reductions must be applied equally on a pro-rata basis to all of the department's programs.

One approach under consideration is a plan to keep all of the department's support prices at currently authorized levels, and implement cuts by reducing the

actual payments 4.3 percent in accordance with Gramm-Rudman.

Such a plan would reduce dairy price supports by 25 to 50 cents per hundredweight, and cut crop support prices by a similar percentage.

Even more severe cuts will have to be anticipated in coming years, as Gramm-Rudman carves larger amounts out of the federal budget.

Programs mentioned for heavy cutbacks or outright elimination in coming years include the Agricultural Extension Service, soil and water conservation programs, Farm Credit loans and rural development grants. In addition, the administration is expected to attempt to institute user fees to finance meat and poultry inspections.

Avian Flu Monitor

With avian influenza once again surfacing in the Northeast, Lancaster Farming recognizes the need for thorough, comprehensive coverage. For your convenience, we've instituted the Avian Flu Monitor, a weekly update on the disease as it affects Pennsylvania and surrounding states. Monitor information not included on the front page or elsewhere in Section A will be located on the Livestock page in Section D.