

# NFU's carpenter tells farmers to 'fight back'

SPOKANE — Farmers must join forces with labor, churches, land grant colleges, rural businesses and others to "Fight Back!" against devastating policies that will mark this era as the "Awful '80s," National Farmers Union President Cy Carpenter told members and delegates attending the organization's 84th annual convention here.

Casting aside the niceties that usually mark a convention speech, Carpenter said, "Because of the terrible severity of these times, because of these conditions that will continue and worsen unless better leadership and solutions are found, this convention and our Farmers Union — each one of us as members — must do our best to show, with naked reality, the conditions of farming and rural communities today and why these dismal conditions prevail. Then we must do our best to give equal clarity for corrective action."

Action taken by convention delegates can start to "restore the values that have been the heart" of family farming, rural communities and the nation, he said.

Carpenter urged immediate action on:

- \*Rewriting the 1985 Farm Bill.
- \*Joining and working more effectively with other groups.
- \*Assuring that the farmland of

America will be owned by family farmers.

\*Reducing hunger in our nation and making sure every child has plenty of wholesome food.

\*Contacting and cooperating with farmers around the world for the progress of all.

\*Forcing these issues into the coming election campaigns.

"Americans have always favored family farmers and rural communities. They are growing increasingly concerned that no corrective action is forthcoming. And they now see themselves, their jobs and their families threatened," he said. They must jump into action now for their own benefit, he said.

"Our good friends in labor must know that not only are farmers some of their best customers, but that agriculture provides more jobs than any other industry," Carpenter said. "Rural businesses must know that this is far more than just an economic recession. Without family farm agriculture we cannot and will not retain rural communities for them to serve and supply."

Meanwhile, U.S. Senator John Melcher (D-Mont.), challenged convention delegates to join him in fighting for American agriculture.

In his keynote address Melcher said the Reagan Administration and its farm policies have "devastated our farmers and the rural communities of this nation."

Mulcher urged farmers to "hang tough — don't give up. Family farms and ranches are economic units that are cost-effective and cost-competitive. We must keep the family farm operating."

Melcher said American producers are competitive with those anywhere in the world. But United States efforts to sell our products have frequently been lost due to delays, intentional blocks or fumbling away of export sales.

"We have lost foreign sales because we have been neither aggressive or sensible in meeting the needs and requirements of countries wishing to buy our products. We lost sales in Morocco because we delayed considering credit assistance. Similar instances have occurred until we have lost sales in almost all of the

60 countries that buy wheat from us annually."

Later, U.S. Representative James Oberstar (D.-Minn.) predicted the 1985 Farm Bill will not survive this year's Congressional elections.

Minnesota congressman said the message being given by rural Americans to their senators and representatives is "get farm debt down, get farm income up, or get out of office."

"What we need in farm policy is a whole herd buyout of the Reagan administration's farm policies," Oberstar said. "The American farmer has survived drought, hail, and grasshoppers, but cannot survive this administration's farm policies."

Oberstar said current farm policies are a form of "economic darwinism" and a "surefire formula" for the concentration of land and wealth in rural America.

He charges the Reagan administration has spent seven times as much as its predecessor on agricultural programs, while farmers are receiving consistently less farm income. "These policies

will bankrupt the farmer, bankrupt the federal treasury or both," he said.

Calling for early passage of the "Emergency Farm Income and Credit bill of 1986", Oberstar said forty percent of farmers in the Midwest were bankrupt and one-fourth of the nation's \$210 billion farm debt was in immediate danger of default. "Both home and family farm ownership is declining due to federal fiscal policies," he said.

Oberstar said American farmers should receive the same protection as is given by other nations who have determined that widespread ownership of agricultural resources is in the best interest of their society.

"The harsh economies of the marketplace should not decide the future of family farms and rural communities," he said. Citing statistics which indicate family farmers are just as or more efficient in production as larger farms, Oberstar said the current farm program was enriching the rich and starving out family farmers.

## PDPP announces breakfast promotion

Breakfast discounts will be offered at 17 McDonald's restaurants in Johnston-Altoona area beginning March 24 in what may become a major break-through in the promotion of milk and dairy products.

The joint promotion by McDonald's restaurants and the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program will continue until April 30.

Customers with a Real Seal symbol from milk cartons or other dairy products will get 50 cents off any McDonald's breakfast entree using real dairy products. Customers will be able to cash in one Real Seal per breakfast.

The McDonald's restaurants have been joined by the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program in a cooperation effort to boost dairy sales.

"It's a first for us," explains Don Duncan, Chairman of the state dairy advisory board that oversees the program. Duncan, a Robesonia dairyman, predicts the joint effort will be expanded to other cities if the breakfast promotion proves successful.

"The restaurant trade is an underutilized market for dairy products," he adds.

The spring promotion will be backed with an advertising campaign in the Johnstown-Altoona markets by both McDonald's and the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program. Real Seals will be featured in all participating McDonald's.

"All natural, good tasting dairy products meet the high standards of quality set by McDonald's, making this Real Seal promotion a natural for both of us," says Duncan, speaking for the 4,000 state dairymen who pick up the tab for PDPP promotions.

Dairies in the Johnstown-Altoona area will run side panels of milk cartons that can be clipped for breakfast discounts. Dozens of other items in supermarket dairy cases also carry the Real Seal label, including pizzas, the board chairman points out. The Real Seal is your assurance of a real dairy food.



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Poorer than toxaphene	0%									

<sup>1</sup>Based on 24 (12 acre) plots in Virginia and Maryland.

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