

## Growth Continues at Eastern Milk

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Eastern Milk Producers continued a five-year pattern of growth in fiscal 1986, recording record profits of \$631,000 and returning a cash dividend to member farmers, even though lower milk prices resulted in a decrease in sales dollars.

The results were announced recently in a joint statement by Earl Forwood, President, and Michael Donovan, General Manager, at a meeting in Syracuse of some 107 delegates representing more than 4,000 Eastern farmers throughout the Northeast.

"Milk and milk product sales hit \$324 million. That is down from last year's \$331 million because of lower prices for raw milk," Donovan said.

Most of the \$324 million in sales revenue went directly to member farmers, who produced 2.17 billion pounds of milk in fiscal '86. President Forwood announced that for the fourth consecutive year Eastern farmers received full Federal order value for the milk they produced.

The net proceeds of \$631,000 represents a 44 percent jump over the previous year's net of \$438,000. The fiscal year ran from April 1, 1985, to March 31, 1986.

Slightly more than half of the profits — \$325,000 — is being returned to farmers in the form of a cash dividend at the rate of 1 1/2 cents per hundredweight of the total volume of milk each member produced during the year. The balance of the net proceeds will go toward reducing debt.

The cash dividend is the first the Syracuse-based cooperative has declared in more than 15 years, and reflects "growing financial and marketing strength," Donovan said.

"It is one more sign, that we made the right decision to go beyond just selling, and get into the business of handling and processing milk," Forwood said, pointing to Eastern's cheese plants at Waverly, N.Y., and Horseheads, N.Y.; a bottling plant at Homer, N.Y.; a butter and powder plant at

Grover, Pa.; milk receiving-transfer plants at Dover, De.; and Sunbury, Pa.; and a state-of-the-art laboratory in Waverly.

"The farmer-owned cheese plants in particular have been the cornerstone of success that we've been able to build on," noted Forwood who runs a dairy farm at

Hop Bottom, Pa.

Eastern acquired the cheese plants in 1982 and leased them to Leprino Foods, the largest manufacturer of mozzarella cheese in the U.S., under a 20-year milk supply agreement.

"One of the brightest spots in Eastern's improved financial

picture," Donovan said, "was its Dairy Products Division, which had record sales of \$7.1 million". Headquartered in Canton, Pa., the 7-year-old Dairy Products Division operates four dairy stores and a bulk-buying grocery service for member and non-member farmers in 11 states.

## Harold Neigh To Retire From PSU

UNIVERSITY PARK — Harold E. Neigh, associate professor of agricultural economics at The Pennsylvania State University, will retire June 30 after 30 years of service to the University.

Neigh, who worked with the Pennsylvania Extension Service, focused primarily on food economics and food policy as they affect families and institutions as food buyers. Working closely with nutritionists, home economists and public health specialists, he taught consumer marketing through extension workshops and in-service education for county-based extension staff.

Neigh used the mass media heavily in his programs. He is well known throughout the state for his weekly newspaper column, "Food News," carried for many years by the Associated Press. The columns, which Neigh authored since 1956, offered information about such issues as rising food prices, price controls, and alternative food choices. He regularly gave consumers information on seasonal items and best buys at the supermarket, including selection and preparation tips.

Neigh appeared frequently on WPSX-TV and other public and commercial channels throughout the state. He was also a long time

contributor of consumer information to the College of Agriculture radio service.

In addition, Neigh developed a number of educational materials, including slide-tape presentations

used by the Pennsylvania Extension Service to help low-income families gain better control of their financial resources.

Neigh holds a bachelor of science degree in horticulture and a

master's in agricultural economics, both from Penn State. Before joining the University faculty in 1956, he was a marketing specialist with the United States Department of Agriculture for six years.

## State Allocates \$75,000 for Mushroom Industry

HARRISBURG — State Senator Noah Wenger has announced the approval of a \$75,000 allocation to the Department of Agriculture within the state budget for the purpose of Pennsylvania mushroom research and promotion.

"Increased foreign competition in the form of imported canned mushrooms has made a definite impact on the mushroom industry in Pennsylvania, especially Chester County," said Wenger. "Mushroom growers have experienced market losses and are feeling the crunch caused by the influx of imported canned mushrooms."

Chester County has become the mushroom capital of the United States — if not the world. Today, more than 50 percent of all

mushrooms produced in this country come from 160 farms in the Chester County region.

"The fresh mushroom industry represents an integral part of the economic foundation of this region of the state," said Wenger. "By

increasing research and promotion of mushrooms, we hope to make Pennsylvania and the nation more aware of the wholesome and nutritional value of fresh mushrooms."

### Pruning Tomatoes

If you are training your tomato plants to a stake, now would be the time to start pruning and tying, says Jeff Jabco, Delaware County Extension agricultural agent. The general idea of pruning is to leave two good vigorous stems on which all fruit will be produced. Remove all others. The main stem or leader of the plant

will be one choice since this will produce the first blossom cluster. The second stem to be left will be a "sucker shoot" or lateral branch growing from the main stem.

The best lateral to select is the one that forms just below the first blossom cluster.

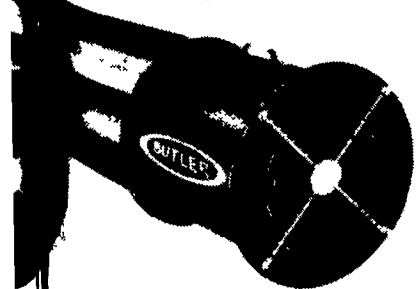
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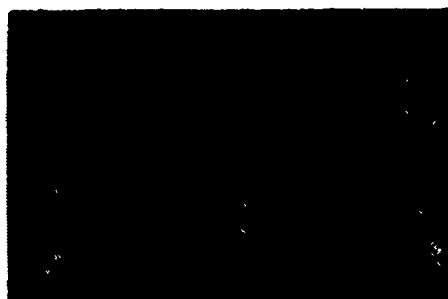
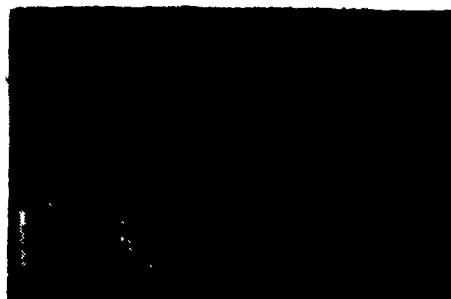
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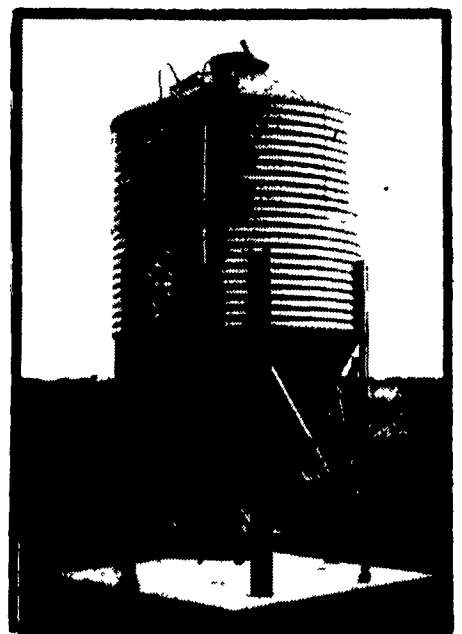
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