A18-Lancaster Farming, Saturday, November 14, 1987

Grange Master Addresses Convention

SYRACUSE, N.Y .- "Federal payments to agricultural producers represent 30 percent of their annual net farm income," said Edward Andersen, Master of the National Grange. In his annual address following the opening of the Grange's national convention, here today, Andersen said that most farmers are still struggling to turn a profit particularly wheat, feed grain and soybean growers.

He said the '85 Farm Bill provides a limited marketing loan program for cotton and rice producers which has proven successful. He said it is time to provide a similar program for wheat, feed grain and soybean producers. "A marketing loan concept program provides the best opportunity to protect producer income, reduce the world oversupply and reduce the cost of the overall farm prog-ram in the long term," said Andersen.

"We cannot, in light of the tremendous federal deficit, expect Congress or the Administration to continue the present level of income protection for farmers," warned Andersen. He said farm programs are viewed as entitlement programs which will eventually be part of the federal budget reduction process. "Methods must be found to reduce the overall cost of the federal programs to support farm income," he said.

He also warned that million dollar payments to farmers are unacsuggested a multi-tiered basis for payment on all program commodities. This would mean the first units of production would receive a greater per unit payment than each succeeding tier of units until the payment reaches zero for production units over and above a designated production level or until the total reaches the limitation payment cap.

Andersen reported that 54 rural banks, including 42 agricultural banks, failed in the first six months of 1987. He noted that the Farm Credit System, which holds over one-third of the total farm debt is asking Congress for financial assistance. He called for legislative action to allow the Farm Credit System to respond rapidly to changing financial conditions and to diversify its loan risk outside of the agricultural industry.

Andersen also reviewed the Beef Promotion program created by the '85 Farm Bill to fund market research, new product use, nutrition research and promotion of beef products. He called the program "another example of farm commodity producers deciding to accept the responsibility of expanding the market for their product." He pointed out that a referendum of all cattle producers will be held next spring to determine if \$1 per head of cattle sold in this country should continue to go

ram. Andersen called for local

ceptable to the general public and toward the Beef Promotion prog- Granges with cattle, including out a "yes" vote for the Beef Promotion dairy animals, in their area to get



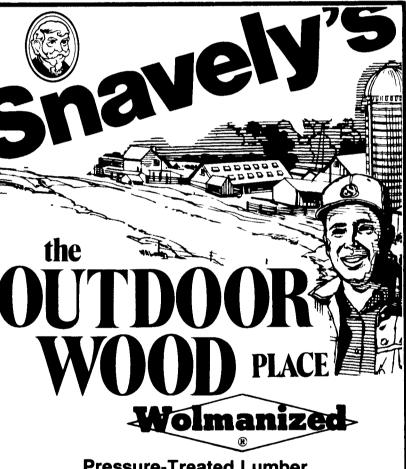


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