

Lancaster Farming

VOL. 33 No. 22

Five Sections

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, April 9, 1988

50¢ Per Copy

\$10.00 Per Year

Dairy Commission Rejects Production Controls

By Karl Berger
Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D.C.— The National Commission on Dairy Policy today recommended a more market-oriented federal dairy program, suggesting major changes in milk price supports and rejecting broad use of production controls.

In a typed, 158-page report to Congress and the Secretary of Agriculture, the Commission proposed a market-oriented formula to set the government purchase price for surplus dairy products.

Use of the formula, the Commission said, would help keep milk supplies in line with demand

and should cut costs through reduced government dairy purchases.

Controls on milk production, the Commission said, are warranted only if price adjustments don't work -- that is, if milk supplies far exceed demand and price changes alone won't balance the market.

Commission Chairman Clyde E. Rutherford of Otego, N.Y., said the report, endorsed by all 18 Commission members, presents a

unique opportunity for the dairy industry to unite behind a proposal for changes in federal dairy programs.

"This report is the first unified proposal from the dairy industry in more than a decade," Rutherford said. "It's a far-reaching, long-term program that all milk producers-- large and small-- can embrace."

Rutherford said enactment of the Commission's recommendations would continue the trend

toward sharply reduced dairy program costs.

"The taxpayer's bill for the dairy program has been reduced from \$2.3 billion four years ago to less than \$1 billion this year," Rutherford said. "Recommendations of this Commission would continue that trend."

The Commission-proposed pricing formula would replace 1985 farm bill provisions that tie cuts in the milk support price to the

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Crop Insurance — A Good Buy?

BY LISA RISSER

HARRISBURG — Most people don't need to think twice about getting insurance for their cars, homes, health, and even themselves. They want to be protected against the unknown mishap or disaster.

It would only be natural then for farmers to insure their crops against disaster, right? Wrong.

NY Veal Dollars To Target Issues

ROME, NY — The New York Beef Industry Council has committed \$50,000 from the Beef Checkoff to a national issues management plan developed by The Veal Committee of The Beef Industry Council in Chicago.

"I believe this is the best way we can spend veal dollars here in New York," says Floyd Many, Veal Representative on the eleven member state council. "Controversial issues, such as animal welfare and food safety are difficult for producers to face all alone. We now have a Veal Issues Management Action Plan to help the veal industry effectively respond to these issues."

The plan involves a veal issues management team, information resource materials, media-trained

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According to John Gartside, Northeast regional director for Federal Crop Insurance Corp. (FCIC), only 4 percent of farmers in Pennsylvania had crop insurance. In Maryland the number was the same, while in New Jersey and New York, a limited number of farmers participated in the grain coverage and a more significant number were insured for peaches and apples respectively. In Delaware, 14 to 15 percent of farmers were covered with insurance and most of them grew fruit or vegetables.

Up until last year not having crop insurance wasn't a big liability. While the 1980 Farm Bill changed crop insurance and phased out disaster relief, the Secretary of Agriculture could, and did in 1985 and '86 due to drought, exercise an option to reinstate dis-

aster relief. Many farmers didn't feel crop insurance was necessary. In 1987, however, farmers didn't receive any money for damaged crops unless they carried insurance.

Those Pennsylvania farmers with coverage and having a damaged crop received a \$6 return on their \$1 investment. That money could mean the difference between farming another year or being forced to sell out.

And this is the thrust of the crop insurance. "We're offering growers protection that would recoup their production expenses," explained Gartside. "There is no profit for us. We're helping the farmer stay in business another year."

Purchasing crop insurance is a management decision. "The farmer should determine what his

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Lancaster Holstein Breeders Visit Friends In Maryland

BY
EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

LANCASTER — Even though it was still March (the last day of), many farmers were home hauling manure and plowing in the warm spring weather. And some of the farmers along on the Lancaster County Holstein Tour to Maryland

were saying they should have been home working too. But this busload of local Holstein breeders will likely soon forget the lost day of labor but not their visit to four successful dairy operations.

My Lady's Manor Farm, Monkton, featured a DHIA average of 21,500 lbs. of milk and 832 lbs. of

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Dairy Of Distinction Entry Deadline Near

WILLIAMSPORT — You never have a second chance to make a good first impression. And in the case of milk drinkers who drive past your farm, you may never get the chance to make a second impression at all.

That's why for the first time last year the Pennsylvania Dairy of Distinction Program was started by a group of volunteers to provide recognition to dairy farms that were the most beautiful in the state. Thus these farms made the best impression on the public who may equate a good-looking farm with the clean wholesome milk they buy in the dairy section of their local supermarket. In addition the program was meant to provide incentive for farmers to clean up the looks of their farms so that a negative kind of impression was not carried to the store dairy case.

The program was new for Pennsylvania last year, and State President Everett Newswanger said no

one knew how dairymen in Pennsylvania would respond. "We knew that the milk promotion idea was strong in Pennsylvania," Newswanger said, "and we knew the dairymen in New York State had embraced the program by using the distinction to attract herdsmen to their farms and describe their farms in other advertisements. But we were still apprehensive until the applications started to roll in."

Nearly 100 Dairy of Distinction winners were named last year. According to program rules, the winners last year are automatically up for re-evaluation again this year, and additional new applications can be received until April 15. Those who applied last year but didn't win may re-apply. In fact, all owners of pretty dairy farms are encouraged to send in an application to their program secretary.

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Peace and Plenty Farm on the Lancaster Holstein Tour provides a scenic portrait as you drive in the farm lane.