

Farmers Are Uniting To Draft Dairy Legislation

BOONVILLE, NY — Several farm organizations are urging dairymen to become involved in developing new federal dairy policy. "With auctions filling our newspapers, it is obvious that dairy farmers are enduring financial difficulties beyond any normal or reasonable expectations," said Bruce Krug of Constableville, who has just attended a National Farmers Union Dairy Committee meeting in Washington, DC.

"Another 50¢ per cwt. cut in the milk support price is a virtual certainty this coming January 1, while the impact of the last cut has not yet been fully felt. This means an uncertain future for farmers at best." There is one certainty, he went on to explain: There will be a new farm bill after the 1985 Farm Bill runs out in 1990.

According to Krug, "Whether or not this bill is good for family farmers or good for processors will depend upon farmers becoming involved in development of new legislation."

The New York Farmers Union, The Pennsylvania Farmers Union, the New York State Farm Alliance, the Committee on Rural Affairs, Rural Vermont and the National Save the Family Farm Coalition have all been involved in the effort to draft new legislation

as an alternative to continued support price cuts.

Krug warned that if the recommendations of two recent studies are put into effect, the result for dairy farmers will be disastrous. The two reports were issued by the National Commission on Dairy Policy and the General Accounting Office. "Both reports recommend a pricing structure which virtually guarantees the demise of the family dairy farm."

"Each report gears pricing towards providing processors with cheap raw product, under the mistaken assumption that low farm prices are passed on to consumers," Krug stated. David Dyer, Executive Director of the NCDP, came under severe criticism for the report from members of the NFU Dairy Council at a recent meeting in Washington. A comparison of the price of manufactured products versus the milk price received by farmers over the past five years proves that lower farm prices are not passed on to consumers.

However, both studies contain statements which farmers should find useful in developing farmer oriented dairy policy. The NCDP report states that as a last resort, a mandatory two-tier pricing system could be installed to keep production in line with demand. Krug

notes this, "seems to be an admission that mandatory production controls would work in controlling production and maintaining prices."

The GAO report is even more favorable to this point of view. According to the GAO, "In both the short and long term, marketing quotas would decrease national production. The pressures for increased production, brought on by higher prices, would be restrained by the quota level that would otherwise exist." The GAO report points out that mandatory production controls would be effective in controlling production and are the only option that would increase producer income!

Recently, the PFU, NYSFA, NYFU and CORA, along with the NSFFC have embarked on a campaign to involve dairy farmers in developing new dairy policy. This

campaign has thus far developed a discussion draft of a bill that contains regional supply management with cost of production pricing. Farmers from all across America have had input into this bill which returns a fair pricing structure to dairy farmers.

Bruce Krug emphasized that it is important for local farmers to become involved with this discussion. "We need to develop a policy

which benefits farmers and the rural economy as well. If we farmers fail to do so, the probability of another processor oriented farm bill will increase dramatically, with the resulting hardships and empty barns that a 'market oriented' policy guarantees."

Anyone wishing more information should contact Bruce Krug at 315/397-2523 or Arden Tewksbury at 717/833-5776.



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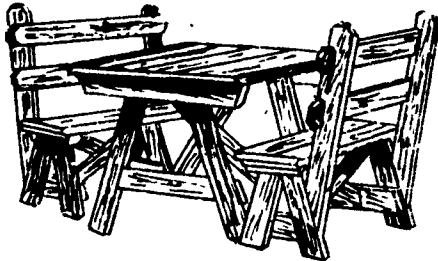
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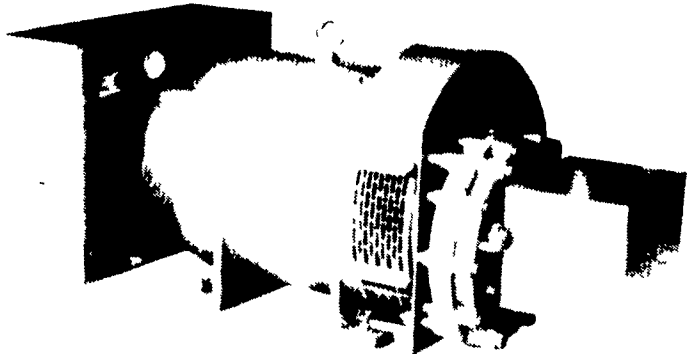
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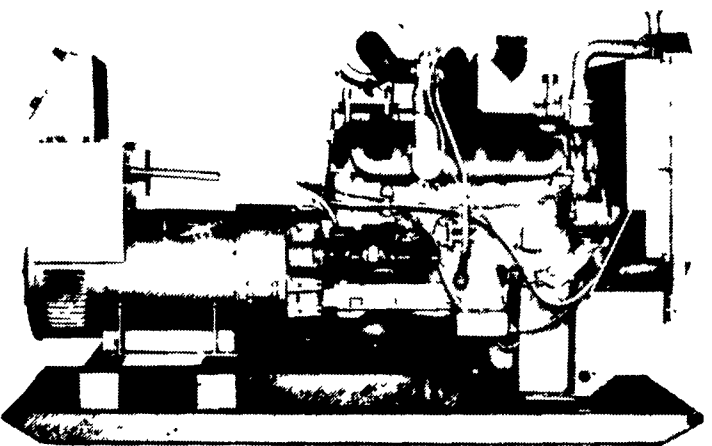
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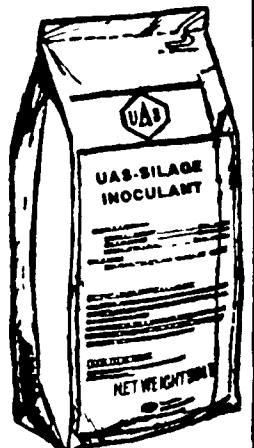
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