

PennAg Opposes Pesticides Bill Ammendment

EPHRATA (Lancaster) — Dr. David R. Brubaker, executive vice president of PennAg Industries Association, testified at the recent public hearings on Pennsylvania House Bill #2213. PennAg, an Ephrata-based agribusiness trade organization with more than 500 members, opposes the passage of H.B. #2213 in its present form.

House Bill #2213 would further amend the Pennsylvania Pesticide

Control Act of 1973, which was previously amended in 1986. Final regulations for the 1986 amendment have yet to be published. H.B. #2213 would severely restrict the use of pesticides in the state and make pesticide application in Pennsylvania extremely difficult to perform.

Dr. Brubaker stated in his testimony that PennAg opposes this bill for the following reasons:

- Timing. Currently, the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency and other federal and regional organizations are studying the problems of pesticide regulation. They are seeking more information prior to recommending comprehensive legislation which may best serve the public interest. At this time, it is premature to enact as severe a measure as H.B. #2213 while these important studies are being conducted. Since the final regulations of the 1986 amendment will be forthcoming soon,

we would allow time to give these changes a chance to work prior to amending the Pesticide Act yet again.

- Breadth. H.B. #2213 encompasses such extreme regulations that pesticide application would be difficult to perform, and would be very burdensome to the applicator. Examples are:

- a. requirement to notify any person, who resides within a one-mile radius of the applica-

tion site, of the date of an application of a pesticide.

- b. requirement to post signs at reasonable intervals, which is not practical in nature.

- c. requirement for applicator to notify within 48 hours of application any person requesting such notice.

- d. combining general and restricted use pesticides is overly broad, and recognition should be given to the relative risks inherent in different pesticides.

- e. the allowance that any person could request to be included in a central registry and could veto the application by any commercial applicator three times per season.

- f. mandatory certification of all applicators, even those using small quantities of general use pesticides.

- g. pesticides could not be applied prophylactically unless there is strong evidence of potentially hazardous infestation to human health or to property or to the environment.

While the issue of pesticide regulation is very complex, PennAg feels that the common goal should be to protect and foster a healthy environment and safe food supply, while protecting agriculture and our economy. Pesticides do have the potential for harm, but have proven to be an integral part of present-day agriculture.

While PennAg does not support H.B. #2213, it will work with government to prevent the misuse of pesticides, while maintaining a safe, plentiful and inexpensive food supply.

Livestock Groups Discuss Meat-Packer Concentration

Washington, D.C. — Ten livestock producer groups and marketing agencies met in Washington, D.C., recently to discuss industry concerns over meat packer concentration and vertical integration.

The meeting was called by the American Farm Bureau Federation. Organizations represented at the meeting included the Livestock Marketing Association, National Cattlemen's Association,

National Lamb Feeders Association, National Live Stock Producers Association, National Milk Producers Federation, National Pork Producers Council, National Wool Growers Association, River Markets Group, the United Stockyards Corporation and Farm Bureau.

The participants examined alternative actions in the private and government sectors. The

group said the Packers and Stockyards Act should be reviewed to determine whether changes are needed. They also said that the price discovery and price reporting processes should be researched to pinpoint problems and find opportunities for improvement. Voluntary private sector actions might also be considered to strengthen competition and improve the marketing system.

The participants voiced a need to create greater industry awareness of the concerns, along with a better understanding of short and long term implications.

Last year, the four largest meat packing firms within each livestock category accounted for 66 percent of the finished beef cattle slaughtered, 37 percent of the hogs, 75 percent of the sheep and lambs and 82 percent of boxed beef sales. Producers are concerned that such concentration of buying power may have serious effects on competition for livestock, price discovery and price reporting.

A recent survey of 1,741 producers and feeders showed that market outlets and bids received for their livestock have declined significantly over the past six years. The survey was conducted by the American Farm Bureau Federation in cooperation with fourteen state Farm Bureaus and USDA's Agricultural Cooperative Service.

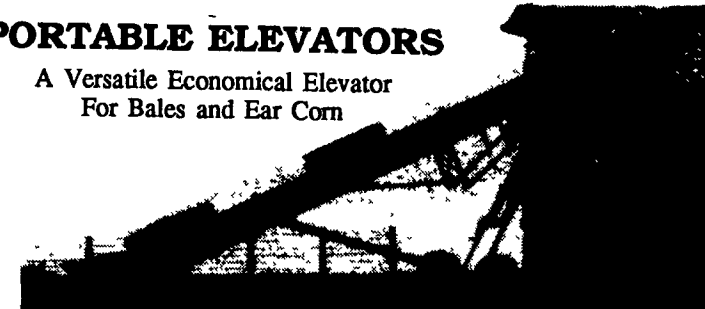
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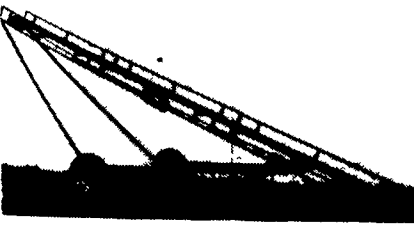





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