

Holstein Directors Vote Against By-law Changes To Advance Grade-Up Plan

BY KARL BERGER
Special Correspondent
SAN FRANCISCO, CA — A controversial proposal to allow grade Holsteins into the herdbook of the nationwide Holstein Association has been dealt another setback.

The association's 16-member board of directors, meeting in San Francisco March 29-April 1, voted not to introduce a proposed bylaws change at the upcoming national convention that -- if approved by delegates there -- would have paved the way for some grade Holsteins to gain registered status.

Although the decision doesn't rule out absolutely the possibility of voting on such a bylaws change in Minneapolis, Minn., June 27-28 -- individual members can propose their own bylaws amendments for consideration at the convention -- it makes it highly unlikely, according to Zane Akins, the association's executive secretary. Nothing short of a bylaws change will bring such animals into the herdbook, Akins said.

However, a number of Holstein leaders say the setback does not spell the end of such efforts. They expect the association eventually will approve some means for grade Holsteins to become registered, a move that advocates say will increase participation in association activities and increase the pool of elite cows and bulls used for genetic advancement.

"It's going to come. If it doesn't come in 1989, it'll be 1990 or 1991," Nelson Gardner, a director from Bridgewater, Va., said recently, noting the increasing market worldwide for embryos and semen from grade cattle.

The vote against introducing it at this year's convention is the

second defeat the "National Identification Program," as Holstein officials have dubbed the grade-up proposal, has suffered since it emerged from a director-appointed committee in late 1987. Delegates to the 1988 convention in San Diego defeated the initial proposal of the Holstein Identification Task Force in a close vote, 126 to 116. The task force subsequently revised the plan to address some of the shortcomings perceived by its critics.

As outlined to members attending the recent series of Winter Forum meetings the association conducts each year, the revised grade-up process still would involve four main steps. Like the similar "genetic recovery" programs already in place in the Jersey and Guernsey associations, the Holstein plan would start with a grade cow that is manifestly Holstein in appearance. This foundation cow would have to be properly identified and -- in contrast to the previous version -- be sired by a registered Holstein.

Female offspring of this cow, if sired by a registered Holstein, would be eligible for provisional registration under Step 2 and their offspring, with similar criteria, under Step 3. Female offspring from registered sires and Step 3 dams would qualify for Step 4 registration, the first to include provisional status in the herdbook. Such animals would have to be enrolled in the association's classification program and, as cows, in the official Dairy Herd Improvement testing program. These animals would carry a "QE" designation -- for qualified entry -- in the herdbook.

Finally, all male and female offspring of these QE cows would be eligible for registration in the

herdbook, although they and their descendants would continue to carry the QE suffix. This stipulation marks another change from the proposal voted on in San Diego, which would have dropped the suffix in subsequent generations.

The revised plan also calls for slightly greater fees than the earlier version proposed. If adopted, the basic cost for an association member to register a Step 4 animal would be \$43 if all the animals being registered in each of the steps were young calves and \$161 if each of the animals were cows. As before, only Step 4 animals would be required to be alive at the time registration is sought. The new proposal also contains more detail about identification and blood testing requirements as well as various other related issues.

Nonetheless, the revised plan has run into much the same opposition that its predecessor faced. At the Winter Forum in Culpeper, Va., March 8-9, Marlin Hoff, a breeder from New Windsor, Md., said he objects to the lack of a live animal requirement until Step 4, arguing that this makes it too easy for a cow jockey to manipulate the process and for breeders to catch up lapsed registrations.

"I don't think we should make it possible for people to stop registering and keep their own records on these cows and allow them to catch it up as easily as this would," Hoff said.

Denny Remsburg, another Maryland member, said, "The dead animal thing is a quick fix for people who want to be in the registered business immediately." Both Remsburg and Hoff said the process would discriminate against faithful registered breeders.

At the Winter Forum in State College, Pa., the following week, participants voted against proceeding with the grade-up proposal in its current form and, in a closer tally, against proceeding with the plan if the animals so registered are identified in a separate herdbook. The idea of a separate herdbook for QE animals emerged from the Winter Forum in Wisconsin, where a majority of the participants were opposed to the proposal in its current form.

It was this kind of opposition that dictated the directors' decision in San Francisco, Akins said. Surveys at the 14 Winter Forum meetings held across the country indicated that only 51 percent of those voting supported going ahead with the grade-up proposal. The directors "didn't feel that was sufficient support," Akins said.

Before that meeting, John Cope, a director from Grantham, Pa., said, "The real struggle of the directors is the fact that it's such an even count of people with

strong stands one way or the other. We still seem to be in a state of polarization on this issue and what we're striving for is some way to have the two sides come together on a give-and-take basis."

The directors' decision does not mean the end of the identification task force, which will continue to meet to discuss the related issue of a uniform animal numbering system, according to Akins. He and other Holstein leaders said they think it likely some form of a grade-up program will be implemented eventually.

One association insider who asked not to be identified said that it's mainly the high profile members, those who attend Winter Forum meetings and go as delegates to the national convention, that are in opposition. The rank and file membership support the concept three to one, he said.

"Just about everybody would say it's inevitable," Akins said. "It's a matter of when and in what form."

Parasite Testing Program Offered

EPHRATA (Lancaster) — The Easter Lancaster County Adult Farmer program will offer a free parasite testing program on Monday, April 17, and Tuesday, April 18.

Any farmer in the area is invited to bring up to four samples of feces from beef and dairy cattle, horses, swine, sheep, or goats to one of six collection sites. The samples will be collected between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. both days at the following locations: Brecknock Elementary School, Caernarvon Elementary School, Blue Ball Elementary School, Summit Valley Elementary

School, Aaron Groff's Farm Store, and Aaron Shirk's Animal Health Store.

The samples should be collected fresh in clean containers that can be tightly closed such as plastic bags, freezer containers, or small jars. Each sample should be carefully labeled with your name and address as well as the type of animal.

This testing is done by Hoechst-Roussel Agri-Vet Co. in their Sommerville, N.J., laboratory and results will be mailed to you.

For further information, call 717/354-4525.

PRO-CUT ALFALFA



VERY HIGH DISEASE RESISTANCE PLUS RESISTANCE TO APHIDS. PRO-CUT IS VERY LEAFY AND IS BECOMING A FAVORITE AMONG DAIRYMEN IN OUR AREA. PRO-CUT IS OUR MOST POPULAR ALFALFA VARIETY BECAUSE OF ITS QUALITY STANDS.

**What Will Your Stand Look Like
3 Years From Now?
Plant Pro-Cut High Disease Resistance**



Chemgro

P.O. Box 218, State Street
East Petersburg, PA 17520
1-717-569-3296
1-800-346-4769 (GROW)

UAS

DAIRY POWER

*The Only Stress Pack
Your Cow Needs*

IT CONTAINS:

- Zinc Methionine
- Niacin • Cobalt Complex
- Choline • Kelp
- DDS - Lactobacillus acidophilus
- Amylase, protease and cellulase enzymes
- Vitamin E
- Vitamin A and D
- B Vitamins

IT DOES NOT CONTAIN:

Any drugs - so there is no fear of drug residues!

THE ABOVE NUTRIENTS

- Increase Milk Production
- Increase Conception Rate
- Decrease Somatic Cell Counts (SCC)
- Decrease Foot-Rot Problem
- Increase Appetite
- Increase Feed Efficiency
- Make Your Average Cow A Top Cow
- Retail \$52/50 lb. Drum

Two ounces of DAIRY POWER daily add enough power to your average cow. Ask by name - UAS DAIRY POWER. Do not settle for substitutes!

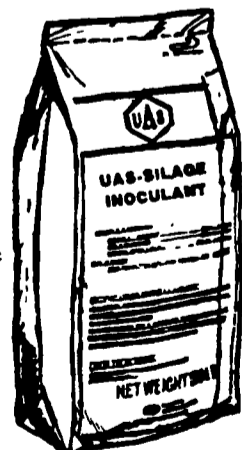
UAS-SILAGE INOCULANT

- University-developed and patented
- Reduces dry matter loss
- Reduces mold growth
- Retains nutrients
- Extends bunk life
- Contains-Plantarum-2B

**And Saves You
\$5.00
For Each \$1.00
You Invest**

Ask For By Name
UAS-SILAGE INOCULANT

Do Not Settle For Substitutes!
Dealer Inquiries Invited



UNITED AGRI-SERVICES, INC.

9201 Penn Avenue South #10
Minneapolis, MN 55431
(812) 881-1915, Toll Free 1-800-422-3371

Or Our Area Representatives

AARON S. GROFF & SON GUY HARBOUGH
RD 3, Ephrata, PA 17522 Waynesboro, PA
(717) 354-4631 (717) 762-1093