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**PENNSYLVANIA
EGG PROMOTION
By Milton Madison
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A study committee has been appointed by the Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture, Boyd E. Wolff, to consider establishing an egg checkoff for generic promotion of Pennsylvania eggs. The committee had 12 members nominated to it, including egg producers and egg marketers. Six of the members attended the first meeting, which was held December 11, 1989. The committee has been

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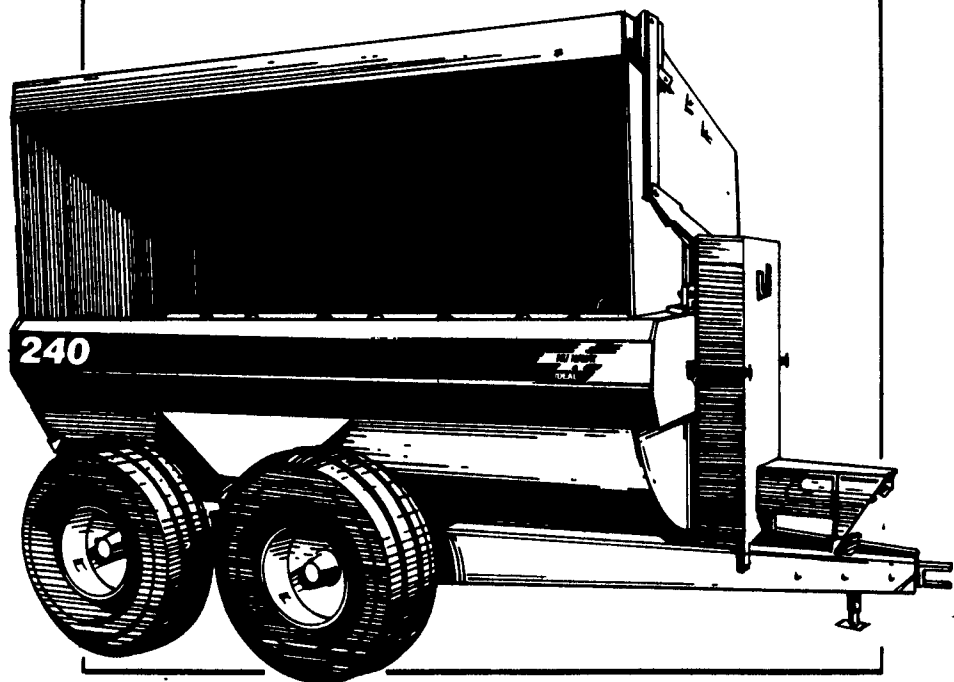


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asked to draft a proposed egg marketing program that potentially could lead to a commodity marketing program for eggs, as part of the Pennsylvania Agriculture Commodity Marketing Act.

The next meeting of the study committee is scheduled for January 15. When the committee finishes drafting the program, there will be at least one public meeting to discuss the program. There must be a public hearing on the proposed program, and it will be held after the hearing notice is published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, news releases are published in state newspapers, and public hearing notices and a copy of the proposed marketing program are mailed to affected producers.

Depending on the reaction of the people attending the public hearing, the Secretary then can call for a vote on the proposed egg marketing program, cancel the program, or ask the committee to alter the program and resubmit it to the hearing process. If the program is brought to a vote, it must be favored by a majority (50.1 percent) of the producers voting and by a majority of producers based on their volume of eggs produced, to become law.

If passed by producer referendum, the egg marketing program calls for the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a board to manage the operation of the program. The board would be made up of eight producers that would each serve three year terms, with no more

than three members' terms expiring in any given year, a ninth member would be the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee. The board would operate the program and hire people or contract for services of others to carry out the promotion, education, or research program that they choose to use.

If passed, the program can be terminated later in a number of ways if producers are not happy with it. The program can be suspended if more than one-third of producers that also produce more than one-half of the eggs in the state request termination of the program in writing. A vote on continuing the program will be called for if 10 percent of the producers request that a vote for termination be held. The program then will be terminated if a majority of those voting indicate that is their choice. In any case, every five years a referendum must be held and two-thirds of the voting producers must vote favorably to keep the program operating.

Pennsylvania is one of the few major egg producing states that does not have a state egg promotion checkoff. California has a one cent per dozen checkoff, while most other state checkoffs vary from two to six cents a case. Preliminary consideration has been given to a 2.5 cent per case checkoff to be paid by producers with 30,000 or more birds. Pennsylvania egg producers will be hearing more about this program as it develops.

Get Winter Farm Work Done

BY DAVE FILSON
Mifflin Co. Agent

LEWISTOWN (Mifflin Co.) — I've always been a bit amused at the attitude some non-farmers have about the good life associated with farming. Don't take me wrong, life on the farm can be one of the most wholesome environments to bring up a family. What amuses me is the idea that farmers don't have anything to do except milk cows once the fall harvest is completed. I would like to share some of the winter time jobs with those who think there is nothing else going on.

Winter means cold weather, freezing weather. Most dairy barns in our area are "cold" barns. That means no heat except for body heat from the cows. Even during periods of cold temperatures, fans must be used to ventilate stale, moist air out of the barn. Water lines can freeze. You can't just wait until the temperatures warm up to thaw frozen pipes or drinking cups. It only takes a few hours without water available and Bossy will let you know how loudly she can bellow.

Cold weather also means snow. I don't know of many farmers who have the luxury of having municipal equipment plow their farm lanes. Some of you might think, Ah . . . isolation - no interruptions, no salesman, no inconvenient visits, but an impassable farm lane also means, no milk truck to empty the bulk tank and no feed truck to make needed deliveries.

There are calves born during cold weather, too. Most often deliveries during cold weather are in an isolated accessible maternity pen, but many times those deliveries occur during the middle of the night. I know of several producers who will bunk in the barn when heifers are about to calve. Swine and sheep producers do much the

same. At lambing time and at farrowing, good managers spend more time, day and night, in the barns than in their homes.

There are instances where cows that have access to winter pasture or exercise areas will choose to find the most remote section of the field to deliver their calf. Calves are hearty critters. It takes severe conditions or maternal abuse to cause the loss of a calf born outside, even in winter.

Other winter time problems occur in the handling of anything containing moisture. Some mechanical silo unloaders won't work when silage freezes to silo walls. That means unloading enough silage to feed 50 or more cows one forkfull at a time from silos as wide as 20 feet or more.

Over the past several years, many farmers have installed manure storage pits or lagoons. Those facilities are labor saving over the winter months. The majority of producers still have to haul manure to their fields, at least every other day, no matter what the weather. Not only is it uncomfortable because of the cold weather, but any breakdown in spreading equipment means immediate emptying of the manure spreader, one forkfull at a time. The manure must not be allowed to freeze, the spreader would be out of use until warm weather thawed the manure.

Almost all farms have more than a few vehicles or machines that must be winterized. Two gallons of anti-freeze doesn't go very far in the radiators of a family car, farm truck, and three or more tractors. Some farms have more motorized equipment that must receive attention . . . combine, harvester, haybine, just to name a few.

Winter is also the time most

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