

## State Grange Supports Dairy Issues

**HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)** — With milk prices continuing to drop, dairy farmers are becoming anxious about what they see as an unfair pricing system. The Pennsylvania State Grange continues to fight for these farmers and work with them to promote their cause.

In the past year, both the state and the national Grange have listened to the concerns of dairy farmers, testified at hearings, and promoted the establishment of a base price for manufactured milk to cover the average cost of milk production and a two-tier price

plan, according to Brenda Shambaugh, legislative director for the Pennsylvania State Grange.

"We are a grass-roots organization which gets all its legislative policies, including those related to dairy issues, from our members," Shambaugh said.

Robert Pardoe, State Grange dairy chairman and dairy farmer, testified before the USDA and the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB) on a number of issues. The State Grange recommended the continuation of the \$1.05 per cwt over the market

price of Class I milk in Pennsylvania. The PMMB has approved continuation. PMMB heard testimony from the State Grange concerning rising fuel costs and a sharp decline of M-W price. The State Grange also testified before the USDA about maintaining the status quo in the federal milk order system.

"Milk prices are continuing to fall," Pardoe said, "and we are aware of the concern of dairy farmers. We must realize that while prices are currently lower than normal (\$11.11), this drop came

after an extremely high price (\$15)."

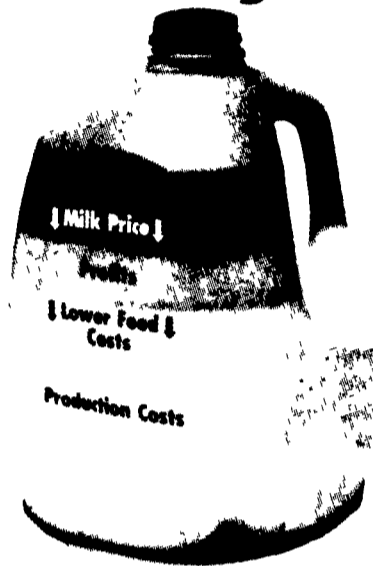
On a national level, the Grange has recently sent proposals for a national supply management program to the USDA, according to Leroy Watson, legislative representative. This program recognizes regional differences based upon the amount of production, availability to markets, or percentage of regional dairy production.

On a related issue, the State Grange supports the establishment of a program to control and eradicate bovine leukemia virus

(BLV). Other countries, including Holland, Germany, Denmark, and Austria have eradicated the disease and the European Economic Community has established a goal to eliminate the virus. Once achieved, this could restrict incoming U.S. exports not free of the virus.



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