

Grange Meets With Legislators

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Co.) — About 400 Pennsylvania State Grange members and state legislators on Monday attended the

annual Grange Week Legislative Banquet at the Holiday Inn, Grantville.



A wetlands panel address a room of State Grange members during the organization's legislative day activities. Barry Isaacs, with the Soil Conservation Service discusses federal laws and activities, while from the left, Sen. David Brightbill and DER representative Roger Fickes await questions from the crowd. Brightbill recently introduced comprehensive wetlands mapping and protection legislation.

Grange Week is nationally celebrated every year by the more than 325,000 members of the almost 125-year-old organization for rural people. The Pennsylvania Grange annually holds its legislative banquet during the week and holds seminar's during the day on a variety of issues.

On Monday, four legislative issues were discussed during seminars: a panel on wetlands; a panel on dairy issues; a speaker on integrated pest management (IPM); and a speaker on nutrient management.

Other workshops/seminars were held, but were related to non-legislative topics.

In a news release, Brenda Shambaugh, Grange legislative director

said, "The Grange is concerned about a number of issues currently on the floor of the General Assembly. Wetland, nutrient management, protection of roadside markets, widow tax, octane testing levels, and the bottle bill are a few of these issues."

Although each seminar was well attended, the wetlands issue has had the most recent attention because of a legislative package proposal from Sen. David "Chip" Brightbill, R-Lebanon, chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

The proposal by Brightbill would adopt the federal definition of a wetland, and would concentrate on regulating wetlands use, rather than creating a new definition.

U.S. Ag Secretary Accelerates Dairy Study

WASHINGTON, April 10-- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced the acceleration of the dairy policy study process mandated by the 1990 farm bill.

"The economic distress of dairy producers is pressing," said Madi-

gan. "By advancing the timetable for completion of the policy study, we will be able to work that much sooner with Congress on the best strategies to assist the dairy community."

The farm bill originally called for a study on dairy policy to be completed by August 1. June 15 is the new date by which the study on dairy policy will be completed.

Madigan said the new deadline would require "a greater effort by USDA through every aspect of the policy study process."

He added, "This is not an internal study procedure. It is a public process which will seek comments from industry and the public."

The accelerated timetable requires the study and notice to be published in the Federal Register by May 15, which will be followed by a 15-day public comment period. During June there will be a review of public comments with the final study and recommendations submitted to Congress by June 15.

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