

NFU Urges Bush To Reject GATT Text

WASHINGTON, D.C. — American farmers are telling the president that a draft agreement on agriculture under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will do them more harm than good. The National Farmers Union has asked President Bush to reject it.

The document in question is

one prepared by GATT Director General Arthur Dunkel. Since GATT negotiators got bogged down when the U.S. and European Community could not agree on farm trade issues during bilateral talks, Dunkel developed a draft agreement that participating countries are now evaluating.

NFU President Leland Swen-

son wrote to Bush. Swenson told the president that his group believes the Dunkel provisions will lead to "a decrease in American farmers' net farm income."

Swenson raised specific objections to the paper including the formation of a new "Multilateral Trade Organization" that would replace GATT and whose powers

over signatory nations would "amount to an infringement on national sovereignty."

The farm leader believes the European Community was given an unfair advantage in the draft text which calls for percentage cuts in the use of export subsidies. The problem with that, says Swenson, is that European exports are

subsidized at a higher level than those of the U.S., and that inequity would remain in place.

On the sticky question of harmonizing health and safety standards globally so that such standards could not be held up as a means for limiting imports, the farm group predicts problems too. The standards being proposed "will place the U.S. government in the predicament of having to choose between consumer and environmental protection on the one hand and American competitiveness on the other."

NFU asked the president to require an environmental impact statement and an economic impact analysis of the agreement before Congress acts to ratify it. The environmental analysis is needed, says NFU, since farming methods and conservation-oriented farm programs may have to change under the plan.

NFU also raised concerns about as yet vague "fine print" contained in the Dunkel test. "The minutia of the final agreement should be fully understood before the U.S. binds itself to the Uruguay Round," Swenson wrote.

Cattle Feeder's Day Set Feb. 4

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The Lancaster County Cattle Feeder's Day is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, at the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster. The theme for this year's event is "Moving Ahead in The Cattle Industry."

Featured speaker this year will be Martin Jorgenson, South Dako-

ta cattle rancher and chairman of NCA's IRM coordinating committee.

Jorgenson will present topics addressing IRM integrated resource management and Dakota Lean, a branded beef product. Gary Cowman, National Cattlemen's Association, will bring area cattlemen up to date regarding national

efforts in beef quality assurance.

Penn State Extension Economist H. Louis Moore will provide outlook on "What's Ahead For Cattle Feeders?"

Addressing the important health issue of shipping fever will be University of Maryland's, Dr. Bob Dyer, formerly with the

Smoketown Animal Hospital.

Anyone interested in cattle feeding is invited to attend. No reservations are necessary. Lunch tickets may be purchased at the door until 11:30 a.m.

In addition to the formal program, there will be an opportunity to inspect commercial exhibits and visit other cattlemen.

The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. with exhibit visitation and the program starts promptly at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting, conducted by the Penn State Cooperative Extension, concludes at 3 p.m. with a question and answer session.

ASCS Announces York Crop Loss Program

YORK (York Co.) — York County ASCS Office will administer a crop disaster assistance program to compensate eligible York County producers for crop losses caused by drought, flood, and other natural disasters in either 1990 or 1991.

"To be eligible, producers with crop insurance must have had losses greater than 35 percent," said D. Wayne Kurtz, county executive director for York ASCS. "Producers without crop insurance must have had losses greater than 40 percent."

Program Applications may be filed from February 3 through March 13.

The 1990-1991 crop disaster program provides cash payments for production losses on participating program crops of wheat

and feed grains; nonparticipating program crops; soybeans, sunflowers, and tobacco; and all commercial nonprogram crops.

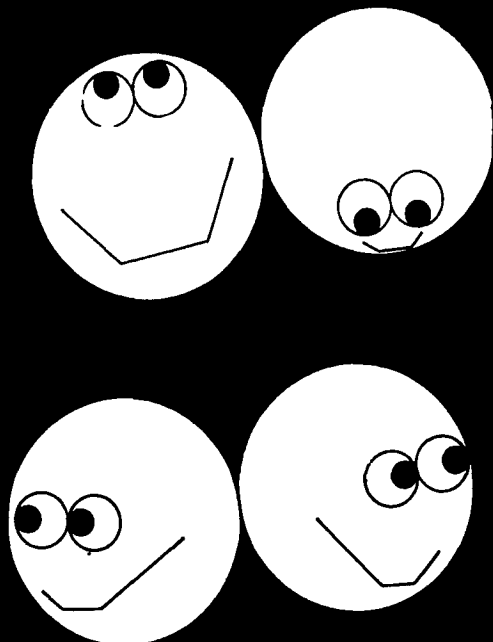
Kurtz said producers who intend to file should begin to assemble their records now, so they will be ready when the program opens. He said that farmers will receive a special mailing with specific information on the program this month.

"If a producer does not receive the disaster program information in the mail by February 3, he or she should call the county ASCS office," he said.

The ASCS official said disaster payments would be computed according to the 1990 Farm Bill, and expects to begin issuing payments to farmers by April 16.

Further details of the disaster payment program may be

obtained from the York County ASCS Office.

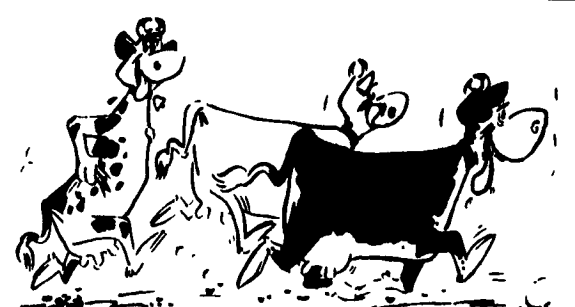


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