

Maryland Farmer Joins National Dairy Board During Troubled Times

KARL BERGER
Special Correspondent
WASHINGTON, D.C. — Frederick County, Md., farmer Harold Lenhart will bring honesty, integrity, and a working farmer's perspective with him when he joins the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board next week in Washington, according to friends and colleagues in the local farm community.

Lenhart, one of a new crop of appointees to the national promotion group, replaces Ernest Miller of Hamburg, Pa., as a representative of a region comprised of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey. He will attend his first meeting May 20-22 in the nation's capital.

Lenhart joins the board at a delicate time in its nine-year history. Farmers leading a "Dump the Dairy Board" drive claim they have garnered 11,000 signatures on a petition to force a referendum on the mandatory 15-cent a hundredweight checkoff that funds the board and other local and regional advertising organizations across the country.

Mike O'Connell, a Wisconsin farmer active in the drive, said he is confident it will get the 14,000-15,000 signatures needed to trigger the referendum. By law, the U.S. Department of Agriculture must conduct a referendum if requested by 10 percent or more of the commercial dairymen in the country, a number USDA now estimates at about 145,000.

O'Connell said the drive's organizers hope to submit their petition to USDA this fall and force a vote on the checkoff next winter.

Perhaps the major bone of contention involves bovine somatotropin (BST), the controversial hormone product still awaiting a federal decision on availability. The board spent about \$1.3 million during the past two years distributing information from the federal

Food and Drug Administration and other sources that claims that milk from cows given the hormone is safe to drink. The board's critics interpreted this effort as an improper endorsement of BST, a charge board spokesmen dispute.

Opponents also have criticized the payment of per diem fees to farmers in various official posts, claiming it leads to leaders who are out of touch with the grassroots. The National Dairy Board does not pay per diem fees to its directors, although sponsoring organizations sometimes do.

Lenhart, who was sponsored for his new post by the Maryland Farm Bureau, has held many leadership posts at the local and state level without such compensation.

The 59-year-old Lenhart is part of the third generation of his family to milk cows for a living. His brother works the home farm; Lenhart has the one next door. His three sons — two of whom are officially part of the family partnership, Len-Land Acres, as is his wife, Ruth — make up the fourth generation.

The Lenharts crop about 700 acres in the "redland" soils near Thurmont, Md. They currently milk about 220 cows, all but a few of which are registered Holsteins.

Although the family does a little merchandising, the main focus is marketing milk, according to the elder Lenhart.

The Lenharts have long been active in church, civic, and farm affairs. Lenhart currently is president of the Frederick County Farm Bureau and chairman of the state Farm Bureau's membership committee. He's a former president of the Frederick County Holstein Association and chairman of the county's Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board. As a member of Maryland Farm Bureau's dairy committee, he has been involved in recent efforts to organize a state-based milk pricing initiative.

Although he has not served as a director of the Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Agency, the major local promotion group, Lenhart is not a stranger to dairy promotion. He currently serves as chairman of the milk promotion committee of the Maryland Holstein Association.

Lenhart said he does not go to the Dairy Board with any particular agenda. However, coming up with new uses for dairy products and targeting the consumption of milk at meals eaten away from home are among the activities that hold the most promise for improving dairy farmers' bottom lines, he said. The lifelong farmer said he has little patience with critics of the 15-cent assessment.

"Nobody wants the 15 cents taken off," Lenhart said. "But I think (the national board members) have done an outstanding job as far as advertising. I think they've done an outstanding job of nutrition work."

There will always be critics who claim that investing in any organization is not worthwhile, according to Lenhart. Moreover, it's very difficult to prove that farmers' investment in promotion pays off in greater sales. But, he said, "If there wouldn't be a profit in advertising, the cola companies, the beer companies wouldn't be spending the millions that they're spending."

The Dairy Board does plan to spend \$56.43 million on various advertising campaigns in the fiscal year that began May 1, or about 72 percent of its \$78 million operating budget for fiscal 1993, according to spokesman Thelma Schoonmaker. Other planned expenditures include \$10.2 million for dairy food and nutrition research, \$4.5 million for public relations and education efforts and \$3 million for market research.

By law, the board receives five out of every 15 cents contributed



Harold Lenhart, Maryland farmer, joins the National Dairy Promotion Board next week in Washington. Lenhart is the new director in the region comprised of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey.

by farmers. Its actual budgets reflect a slightly higher percentage than the mandated one-third; the remainder goes to the other promotion groups, Schoonmaker said. Lenhart will be one of 36 farmers who serves on its board of directors. The other directors representing the Middle Atlantic region are Penrose Hollowell of Pipersville, Pa. and Horace Waybright of Gettysburg, Pa.

MILLER DIESEL, INC.

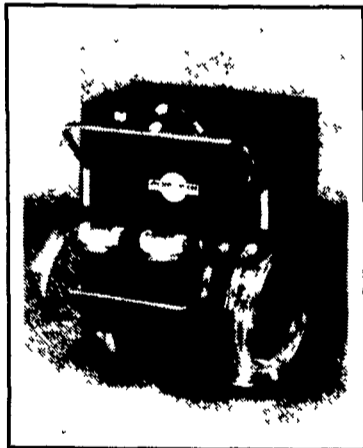
DIESEL FUEL INJECTION & TURBO CHARGER SPECIALIST
6030 Jonestown Road
Harrisburg, PA 17112

Phone 717-545-5931 — Interstate 81 Exit 26

"PORTABLE GLYCLEAN" ANTI-FREEZE RECYCLING SYSTEM

- RESTORES USED ANTI-FREEZE TO BETTER THAN ORIGINAL CONDITION IN APPROX. 30 MIN.
- REDUCES HAZARDOUS WASTE
- \$\$\$ BIG SAVINGS \$\$\$

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION, WRITE OR CALL



GENERATORS



DIESEL
L.P. GAS
P.T.O.
NEW & USED

SPECIALIZING IN COMPLETE
AUTO START STANDBY POWER SYSTEMS

For Sales and Service Call The Manufacturer

MARTIN ELECTRIC PLANTS

280 Pleasant Valley Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522-9620

Tel: 717-733-7968 Fax: 717-733-1981

GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI

BUY NOW! SAVE
FOR YOUR FALL SAVE
GRAIN SET-UP SAVE

E.M. Herr - Grain Bin Specialists
30 Years Experience - Let Us Help To Plan Your System

NO JOB TO SMALL OR LARGE
FROM FARM TO COMMERCIAL SET-UPS

GSI GRAIN BINS AND ACCESSORIES
FACTORY WAREHOUSE PRICES



- Weight-Tronix Feed Mill
- Grain Bins
- Feed Bins
- Wet Tanks
- Utility Augers
- Grain Dryers

Airstream Agri-Floor Systems

Fuel Efficient Vane Axial Gas Heaters



- Transport Augers
- Bucket Elevators
- Stirring Systems
- Air Drying Systems
- Also Available For Air Drying Computerized Aeration Monitor

Direct Drive Grain Spreaders



YOUR EXCLUSIVE **GSI** FACTORY WAREHOUSE



★ Full Line Parts Dept. ★ Sell, Service & Install ★

14 Herrville Road
Willow Street, PA 17584

Ph: 717-464-3321 or Toll Free 800-732-0053

Store Hours: Mon.-Sat. 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM

GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI GSI