

## NFU Leader Issues NAFTA Concerns

GUADALAJARA, ME — The President of the National Farmers Union told farm leaders from North, Central and South America Thursday that U.S. farmers have serious concerns about the pending North American Free Trade Agreement.

NFU President Leland Swenson told those attending the International Federation of Agricultural Producers "Conference of the Americas" that his concerns can be lumped into four areas: the effect of NAFTA on farm prices and farm income; the potential loss of jobs and industry from rural communities in the U.S.; the possibility of food safety problems and environmental problems.

"It is evident that increasing the level of imports (into the U.S.) will have a devastating effect on producer prices," said Swenson. "Producers will face direct competition from Mexican producers who enjoy lower input and labor costs than U.S. farmers."

The farm leader said sugar farmers may be hit especially hard. After visiting a Mexican sugar cane processing plant Wednesday where workers are paid \$10 per day, an average, Swenson asked how the U.S. could compete if it wants to maintain a suitable standard of living for its people.

On the issue of job losses, Swenson told the group the migration of American companies to Mexico has already begun. "While our negotiators have assured us that job losses resulting from U.S. firms moving to Mexico will be minimal, we find it ironic that already firms like Excel, Conagra and others have bought plants or are building plants in Mexico," he said.

Swenson said America's farmers also have great concerns about import inspections at the Mexico-U.S. border. He said there are already reported cases of bovine tuberculosis in Texas because of lax live cattle inspec-

tions. "What will happen if we open our borders even wider?" he asked.

The farm leader said those same concerns are valid among con-

sumers who worry about the safety of their food particularly when it comes from nations with different safety and environmental standards.

Swenson's group has issued a list of recommendations to the new Clinton Administration aimed at improving the agreement before Congress is asked to ratify it later this year.

## N.Y. Bull Test Under Way

ADDISON, N.Y. — The 1992-1993 New York Bull Test for beef bulls of all breeds is off and running well.

Seventy-three bulls of 12 different breeds showed up at the Cornell Teaching & Research Center at Harford, N.Y., this fall, went through their orientation warm-up, and have completed their first 28-day reporting period.

Three breeds have not participated in this test recently. They are RX-3, Salom, and Blonde d'Aquitaine. Listed in order of first weigh period gain by breed are:

	ADG	Top Bull ADG	Consignor
Red Angus	4.77	5.86	Ken Marquis, Ithaca, N.Y.
Shorthorn	4.57	5.25	CloonLara Farm, Youngstown, N.Y.
Angus	4.56	6.00	Ballantrae Angus Farm, Westfield, N.Y.
RX-3	4.54	5.36	West Creek Cattle Co., Victor, N.Y.
Charolais	4.52	4.83	Cooper Charolais Farm, Windham, Maine
Simmental	4.44	5.34	Fenton River Farm, Willington, Conn
Salers	3.65	4.18	New Age Cattle Co., New Berlin, N.Y.
Salom	3.64	3.64	New Age Cattle Co., New Berlin, N.Y.
Gelbvieh	3.62	4.00	Brandywine Farm, Freeport, Maine
Polled Hereford	3.49	5.57	Valley View Farm Farms, Buckhannon, W Va
Hereford	3.45	3.45	Serendipity Farm, East Orland, Maine
Blonde d'Aquitaine	1.79	1.79	Baker's Acres, Waddington, N.Y.

ShiRaLoKen Farm has three consigned Angus bulls, all of which gained in excess of five pounds per day with a high of 5.93.

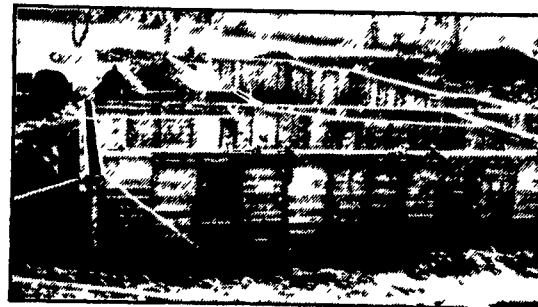
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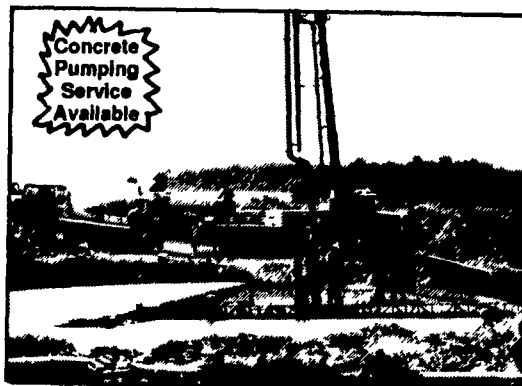
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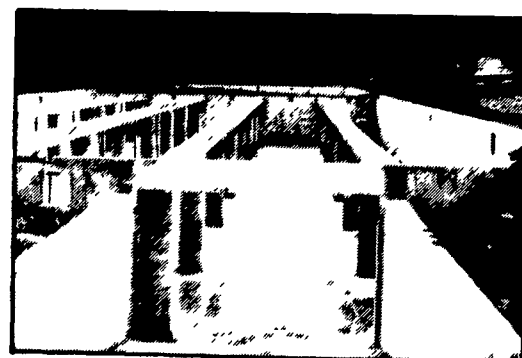
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