

# NAFTA To Help Reduce 'Artificial Costs,' Says Farm Bureau President

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Lancaster Farming Staff  
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)  
—Reducing trade barriers will do a lot to eliminate "artificial costs" on products, according to Dean Kleckner, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Kleckner spoke to about 200 attendees at the golden anniversary celebration of the founding of the American Forage and Grassland Council at the national conference on Monday at the Host Resort.

The American Farm Bureau president operates a 350-acre, 1,800-head swine farrow-to-finish farm in Rudd, Iowa. He said that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) recently approved by Congress will create the "potential for a trade-free continent" encompassing the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

"If the future unfolds like it's supposed to, trade barriers between these three nations will be gone in 15 years," said Kleckner.

The agreement, which paves the way for the final passage of the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) later this year, will mean better prices for American consumers and more markets for agricultural products.

"Eliminating trade barriers is just making more sense... because it costs an awful lot to protect domestic jobs," he said.

Kleckner pointed out the results of two reports that examined just how much the protectionism, which NAFTA will help to eliminate, costs. One is from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which examines the costs to taxpayers and consumers in 24 developed countries. The study looked at one year in particular — 1992 — to see how much it cost. The result? Consumers paid about \$354 billion in higher costs and ag subsidies.

Another report, from the Institute for International Economics, placed the cost of protection for U.S. consumers at about \$70 billion annually.

"How do consumers put up

with those higher prices?" said Kleckner. "I think that most of them don't know about it."

In this country, there is too much emphasis on job protection

at almost any cost.

According to the Institute for International Economics Report, consumers pay about \$170,000 every year to save each job.

NAFTA allows the passage of GATT to open up markets to about 117 nations. He equated the passage of NAFTA and its effect on

(Turn to Page A24)



John Rodgers presents his outgoing president's remarks.

## National Grassland Enthusiasts

(Continued from Page A20)

nell University, and Daniel J. Undersander, University of Wisconsin.

Those receiving merit awards are: J. Mike Phillips, Southwest Research & Extension Center, Hope Arkansas; Ray Hoyum, Western Ag-Minerals, Houston, Texas; Steven L. Fales, Penn State University; Jerry H. Cherney, Cornell University, and Daniel J. Undersander, University of Wisconsin.

Those receiving distinguished grasslander awards include: Charles M. Wolgemuth, Hershey; Joe D. Burns, Knoxville, Tennessee; Foy Campbell, Montgomery, Alabama; Willis A. King, Clemson, South Carolina; Dwayne Rohweder, Sun Lakes, Arizona; Arland W. Pauli, Lanark, Illinois; James R. Turner, Arcadia, California; Robert Van Keuren, Wooster, Ohio; Walter F. Wedin, Bloomington, Minnesota; and Robert E. Wagner, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

In the young scientist competition, Mark Gardner, Penn State, won first place with his presentation: *Maturity and species effects on forage quality and in protein degradability of forage legumes.*

Eric Spandal, Michigan State, was second with his presentation: *The relationship between plant maturity and forage quality in alfalfa-grass mixtures.*

Paulett Pierson, Ohio State, was third with her presentation: *Greenhouse selection for resistance to Sclerotinia crown and stem rot in alfalfa.*

And Stacy Campbell, Michigan State, was fourth with her presentation: *Maturity and species effects on forage quality and in protein degradability of forage legumes.*

In the forage spokesperson competition winners are: 1. James McKinlay, Ontario; 2. Donnie Shaw, Kentucky; 3. Audrey Rodgers, Pennsylvania; 4. Bradd Vickers, New York, and 5. Kevin Belkholm, Minnesota.

John Baylor was honored for his many years of service to the American Forage and Grassland Council, especially for his efforts to write and publish the history of the association that has been completed for this the golden anniversary of the council. The past presidents sent a letter of commendation to John, and this letter was framed and presented at the awards banquet.

The letter reads in part: "The past presidents of the American Forage and Grassland Council express appreciation for writing the history of the AFGC. This was a major undertaking and a significant achievement. Those of us who have been privileged to serve this organization in the capacity as president want to take this opportunity to thank you for documenting the forage council's first 50 years. With the knowledge of what has gone before, our present and future leadership can be better prepared to meet the challenges of the future. The past presidents salute you and thank you for contributing so much, both during our past, and on this landmark occasion as we begin our journey into the next 50 years."

John Rodgers passed the gavel to the incoming president, Clive Holland. The next conference is scheduled for Lexington, Kentucky, in 1995.



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