

Nominations Sought For Commodity Boards

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Agriculture Secretary Charles C. Brosius has announced that nominations are being accepted for positions on several of the state's commodity marketing and research boards.

Brosius said the general public and leading farm organizations have until May 19 to submit nominations for the following boards: Apple Marketing, Peach and Nectarine Research, Potato Research, Sheep and Lamb Mar-

keting, and Vegetable Marketing and Research.

Producers affected by the programs are eligible for nomination.

The Agriculture Department's Bureau of Market Development tallies nomination ballots in order to make the final selections.

"We want our producers to get involved with these programs," Brosius said. "These research and marketing efforts are designed to increase farm profitability."

Members would be responsible

for all matters pertaining to the programs, such as hiring personnel, administering the program budgets and issuing annual reports.

To make a nomination, submit the person's name, address, county, and area of interest to Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Market Development, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408.



The Netherlands export a lot of poultry products, but have had to deal with the problems of manure, according to Dr. Ron Meijerhof, visiting professor from the Centre for Applied Poultry Research, Spelderholt, The Netherlands, on left. Meijerhof spoke to about 35 poultry producers at the Penn State-sponsored Poultry Management and Health Seminar on Monday at Kreider Farms Restaurant.

- Animal welfare. There is a lot of pressure from consumer organizations, government, and industry to study different types of layer and broiler systems. Aviary systems are under study, and ways to handle cockerel killing are progressing that "suits industry and is acceptable to public opinion," said Meijerhof.
- Product quality and safety.

Producers and consumers are both part of the issue. But campylobacter, a disease which can often be confused with Salmonella, is the real culprit and is difficult to control because of far-ranging and excessive regulations. In fact, there is so much confusion, according to the professor, that campylobacter is simply referred to as Salmonella.

- Efficiency. To produce a better bird and improve the feed quality are also being examined at the Centre.

The environmental issues often take center stage in research at the Centre. Government mandates dictate that ammonia levels have to be reduced. So research is looking at ways to dry up the manure, reducing the moisture and putting the manure in marketable form. But it is costly. A directive is on to establish ammonia levels in the environment at 70 percent of what they were nearly 10 years ago.

The "pressure from politics" that has created these restrictions has industry and educators worried. Meijerhof said that many of the voters who decide on the regulations are from the bigger cities. Some voters think that farmers, in general, "are rough on animals, are wealthy, they contaminate the environment, and say we don't need them. (The voters) say we can get what we need from the supermarket anyway."

As a result, industry has had to work closely with the consumer groups to join them in the early stages and try to introduce "common sense" to work out the problems.

"A lot of the regulations are already in place by the industry itself before the government comes in. It works out. I wouldn't say quite well, but it works out."

Environmental Regs, Consumer Groups Challenge

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it's just different."

To conduct research, the costs are split 50-50, according to Meijerhof, between the government and farm organizations. Both have to pay for studies on poultry. "In practice, it means that (this situation) is often used as a sort of battlefield between the government

and industry. A lot of times we are used as a tryout," he said.


Areas under research include:

- Environmental issues. "Ammonia production is probably the biggest problem we have in our environment," because of high levels of nitrogen in the manure. Meijerhof indicated that agricultural production is blamed

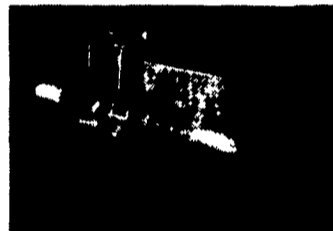
excessively for ammonia production, which he said is caused "mainly by heavy industry and mainly by cars, and not so much by agriculture. But the heavy industry and cars are not as easy to control as the agriculture industry can be controlled." So research is being conducted to limit the amount of phosphorous and ammonia produced.

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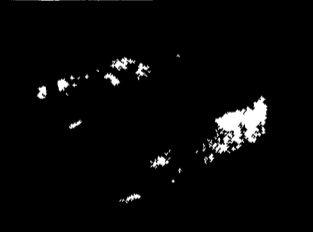
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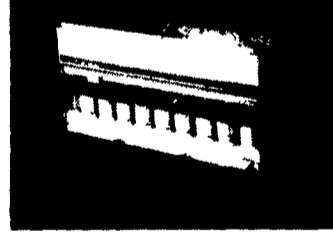
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