

Producers To Vote On Lamb And Wool Checkoff Referendum

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
WAYNESBURG (Greene Co.)
— Sheep producers will soon be asked to vote to approve, for the first time, an industrywide checkoff program that will go a long way to promote domestic sheep and wool.

Hard fought through the last minutes of the 104th U.S. Congress in the fall of 1994, the Sheep Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1994 "is the only game in town to maintain any stability within the U.S. sheep industry," wrote Janet Mawhinney, member of the 13-person Referendum Task Force for the American Sheep Industry (ASI) Association, in a recent letter to *Lancaster Farming*.

Mawhinney operates a 100-ewe Dorset breeding and custom freezing operation in Waynesburg with her husband Michael. Contacted by phone on Tuesday, Janet said the proposed checkoff on lamb is for one cent per pound on both domestic and imported lamb based

on weight at the time of sale. On domestic wool, the proposed checkoff amount is two cents per pound grease at the time of sale. The amount to be raised according to checkoff guidelines has a cap of 2.5 cents per pound.

In both cases, as in other industry checkoff programs, the amount would be deducted from the producer's check at the time of sale.

Producers who have at least one sheep for at least 30 days, including youth, are eligible to vote. Those who previously signed up for Wool Act support payments will have the referendum mailed to them in the fall. Producers can also obtain referendum forms at the local Consolidated Farm Service Agency office. The referendum will be voted upon in mid-October this year, according to Mawhinney.

The Waynesburg sheep producers, who operate Mawhinney Mountain Dorsets, are concerned that the loss of local markets to importers may cause thousands to quit the business. After the passage

of S.B. 1548 in the fall of 1993; which phased out the 1954 Wool Act, thousands of producers have been lost.

Sheep producers depended on the Wool Act, which provided money to operate from tariffs on imported wool products, to survive. As a result of the phasing out (which reduced rates to 50 percent for the 1995 crop), as much as 60 percent of the market has been lost to importers.

According to Joseph Vogel, president of the Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers Association, the amount paid through the program for 1995 will only be about 25 percent of normal.

Vogel views the checkoff program as a "self help" program. According to Vogel, there are about 3,800 sheep producers in Pennsylvania, and of them, at least a third derive the major portion of their income from sheep production.

"It's scary," said Janet Mawhinney. "I don't want to see us lose our industry here. There are

so many benefits that it provides."

About 18 percent of individual sheep and wool producers have been lost in the U.S. because of the phasing out of the Wool Act, according to Mawhinney.

While many industry promotion programs spend many millions of dollars on education, promotion, and research, the sheep and wool industry is allocated only \$7 million per year. This compares to \$80 million spent by the beef industry, \$45 million spent by the cotton industry, and \$40 million spent by the pork industry, according to Mawhinney.

"Is it any wonder we are unable to have a 'catchy' television promotion?" wrote Mawhinney in a news release.

Of the \$7 million allocated to the sheep industry, most of the Wool Act tariff money went to deficit reduction, with little returned for education and promotion.

With the passage of the checkoff, the total amount expected for promotion of lamb and wool will

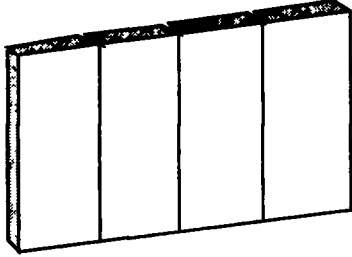
rise from the current \$7 million under the Wool act to \$13 million under the proposed checkoff program. According to Vogel's estimates, about 50 percent of the income will be placed into marketing.

If the referendum is approved, state sheep and wool grower organizations would receive 20 percent of the collected checkoff funds compared to the 10 percent now received under the phased-out Wool Act.

Passage of the referendum would create a National Sheep Promotion, Research, and Information Board whose members will be nominated by certified state organizations and appointed by the U.S. secretary of agriculture. The board will be made up of 85 producers, 10 feeders, and 25 importers. Pennsylvania will be entitled to one member on this board, according to Mawhinney.

(Turn to Page A29)

Lancaster Poured Walls



IT'S HAYLAGE SEASON - THINK BUNKER SILO!!
can you think of a better wall than poured on site with lower construction costs and no maintenance?

ASK FOR PRICES FROM:

Lancaster Silo Co., Inc.

2008 Horsehoe Rd. • Lancaster, PA • (717) 299-3721 • 800-770-3721

CASH & CARRY ELECTRICAL SUPPLY, INC.

306 S. Hess St. Quarryville, PA 17566
Hours: M-F 7-5 Sat. 8-12

717-786-5407 • 800-840-1472



Summer Stock-Up Specials

Circuit Breakers - Circuit Breakers Call For More Info.



PLEASANTAIRE
CANARM

Furnas
ELECTRIC CO.



56" PADDLE FANS
1-9 \$45.58
10 or More \$43.25

- D.P. Contactors
- Foot Switches
- Drum Switches
- Pressure Switches
- Motor Starters



BARN CIRCULATORS
20" - \$128.00



WALL EXHAUSTERS
8" thru 20"
In Stock



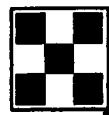
Rindale
SILO PLUGS
AND
CONNECTORS

VAPOR PROOF
100 WATT LIGHT
w/Guard
\$16.79 ea.
Case Lot



RONK - Transfer Switches for On-Farm Use
with contacts for stand-by generators.

HESS MILLS

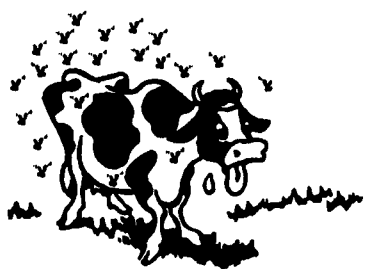


PURINA

HARD HITTER POUR INSECTICIDE

Kill Those Flies and Make Your Cow Comfortable!

WITHOUT
HARD HITTER



WITH
HARD HITTER



- Easy To Use-Pour On
- Kills Flies, Lice, Mosquitoes & Ticks
- Long Lasting

HESS MILLS

PURINA CHOWS

6 S Vintage Rd., Paradise, PA 17562

(717) 442-4183 (717) 768-3301 800-635-3592