PMMB To Consider Request

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Affairs Committee, we are gravely concerned about the future of our dairy industry.

"As we all know, the average age of individuals willing to devote their lives to the demands of dairy farming is growing older. Young people are not entering this career field due to cost and time commitment for marginal returns on their investments in many cases.

"In order to maintain a stable supply of milk for Pennsylvania consumers, and in order to stabilize the shrinking number of farmers in the dairy industry, we ask you to provide the price support that will enable them to continue production and cover their ever rising costs."

According to a news release, Mel Eckhaus, dairy specialist for the PFB, testified that the PFB not only supports maintaining the current 80-cents per cwt., but wouldn't mind seeing it go higher.

"In fact, if it were not for so much discussion regarding market conditions, it would be very easy to support a price higher than the 80 cents, given the cost/price squeeze dairy producers are currently under," he said in the news release.

"Beyond any shadow of doubt, this is the absolute worst time in the last five years to be considering a lowering of the over-order price," he said.

"It is absolutely clear that in the 12 months ending March 31, 1995, the average Pennsylvania dairy farm has experienced the lowest level of profit in many years."

According to Eckhaus, the margin of profit averaged 51 cents per hundredweight.

Eckhaus said that, considering additional costs for management and equity capital, USDA dairy assessments and a reasonable 3.5 percent profit, "It is no longer appropriate to speak of low profits, but rather high losses."

In response to the claim that out-of-state milk is diplacing Pennsylvania milk, Eckhaus said, "The position of Pennsylvania Farm Burueau is that market conditions are important."

However, he added that, "... in order to determine that (milk) prices should be reduced because of market conditions, we believe these conditions should be documented."

According to the PFB new release, "... the sales of Class I milk have not decreased significantly in Pennsylvania's six milk marketing areas. In two areas, fluid milk sales have increased by 1.3 percent and 3 percent, respectively.

"In the four areas where sales decreased, the largest amount was .8 percent."

The PFB stated that its organization represents 26,167 member families in 61 counties with about 44 percent of those being dairy farmers.

The state has an estimated 11,800 dairy farms.

Because membership in any of the organizations which submitted testimony is not exclusive to membership in another, it is possible and probable that some dairy farmers are being claimed to support both sides of the issue at the same time.

In the meantime, the final transcripts from the hearing have to be completed, and additional testimony compiled, and all reviewed by counsel. The PMMB is then expected to review the testimony and act accordingly.

The goal is to have the matter settled and ready to go into effect in July.

JUNE IS Dairy MONTH

Young Farmers Set Meeting

MOHRSVILLE (Berks Co.)—Please plan to attend the Tulpehocken Young Farmers program on Monday, June 5, at 7:30 p.m. The program will feature a speaker from the Lancaster Chapter of Farm Safety Just For Kids.

The meeting that evening will be held at Reu-Hel Farms in Mohrsville, the home of Scott and Connie Troutman.

During the Farm Safety program, young farmers will take a walk to look for dangerous areas on the farm.

Bring your children to have a fun and educational evening together. Refreshments for the evening will be ice cream and drink provided by the club. Bring your own strawberry topping.

TANKS TANKS TANKS