

Lancaster Farming

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 APR 24 1996
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Vol. 41 No. 24

60¢ Per Copy

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, April 20, 1996

Five Sections

\$25.00 Per Year

Farm Bill Creates Uncertainty And New Playing Field

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
 Lancaster Farming Staff
 HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — A lack of easy access to details and provisions included in the 1996 Farm Bill has created uncertainty and confusion about what farmers should do strategically to survive an anticipated transition in historic agricultural production and marketing practices.

Information has been coming

slowly out of Washington D.C. as U.S. Department of Agriculture officials attempt to analyze the document, summarize and publicize its intent.

However, it is apparent that producers of insurable crops better decide before the end of the week if they want to sign up for the government disaster protection.

And the kicker is that if a producer does not sign up by May 2, then he will not be eligible for that

insurance for the next seven years.

According to a news release by the Ad Hoc Associates for the National Crop Insurance Services, Virginia Beach, Va., "Although the requirement linking crop insurance to several other farm programs has been dropped under the new legislation, the net result is that if you do not sign up for the minimum (catastrophic) level of crop insurance coverage, you will forfeit your rights to any crop dis-

aster relief, even access to emergency loans.

"Those producers who heeded Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman's urgent advice to sign up for higher levels of crop insurance coverage are already protected, as are those who already signed up for only the minimum CAT coverage.

"The one-time window of opportunity to sign up for CAT coverage is for those producers

who are totally exposed to the risks of crop disaster without any government protection."

Further, the news release stated that, "Should any producer who has only the basic CAT coverage choose to cancel their policy during this (until May 2) period, they will have to sign a waiver acknowledging that they understand they will not be eligible for any disaster assistance for any insurable crop.

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Put Aside Worries For Night Of Fun At Poultry Banquet

ANDY ANDREWS
 Lancaster Farming Staff
 HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — Country music star Ricky Skaggs is the featured entertainment at the Pennsylvania Poultry Federation Annual Fund Raising Banquet next Wednesday evening, April 24, here at the Hershey Convention Center.

For a few moments, poultry producers can set aside concerns about feed prices and rumors of potential corn shortages at the end of the summer and have a night of fun.

Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

At the banquet, the main dish

will be turkey piccata (turkey sauteed with fresh herbs and white caper butter), along with au gratin potatoes and grilled vegetables. Dessert will be a "Hershey Snowball" (vanilla ice cream covered with toasted coconuts).

Last year, 1,500 people sat down for a night of dinner and entertainment, according to John Hoffman, executive director of the Federation.

"The Federation's most important activity in the past year has been food safety," said Hoffman. He highlighted the successful hazards analysis critical control points (HACCP) program implemented through the all-volunteer

Pennsylvania Egg Quality Assurance Program, or PEQAP.

About 225 layer producers are signed up under PEQAP, which has several programs designed to control diseases at the production level.

Hoffman also noted the success the worker's compensation program of the Federation in the past year. Also, members have been kept informed about the Federation activities through the monthly newsletter, Poultry Post.

The Federation provides a number of important benefits for producers, including:

- Food safety. The Federation is the only state agricultural organi-

zation that employs a veterinarian to manage food safety programs for producers and processors.

- Poultry health leadership. The Poultry Health Committee continuously monitors flock health and avian influenza surveillance data to maintain effective control and eradication programs, including the use of the Federation indemnity fund.

- Nutrient management. The Federation constantly participated in the development of nutrient management legislation and regulations to ensure effective but fair requirements for poultry and egg producers.

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Ricky Skaggs

Beef Council Responds To Negative BSE Media Coverage

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Beef producers and industry leaders are outraged at a blatantly anti-beef segment which aired on the April 16 Oprah Winfrey TV Show.

Pre-airing promotions touted the episode as a food safety educational program for consumers, but

a beef industry spokesperson and a scientific expert had 75 percent of their taped comments edited out of the program in favor of anti-beef activist Howard Lyman. The show appeared on six stations in Pennsylvania.

"The show provided anti-meat activists with a platform for biased

and unsubstantiated claims against beef, and had done a tremendous disservice to millions of American consumers," said David Ivan, executive director of the Pennsylvania Beef Council. "The episode was one of beef-bashing — not a responsible discussion of BSE and the safety of the Ameri-

can beef supply. Oprah took a complex technical issue and turned it into an hour of unjustified scare-mongering."

The Pennsylvania Beef Council is aggressively responding to the negative show about BSE, often referred to as "Mad Cow Disease." Beef Council staff has

contacted all of the stations on which the program aired in Pennsylvania to express their dissatisfaction with the Oprah episode. The Council has also offered to meet with the news directors of the stations to discuss BSE so that each station is prepared to address

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The champions at the Spring Maryland Holstein Show. From left, Mike Iager with C Maplebrough Revelation Kandy, the reserve senior champion; Chip Savage with Lylehaven Ann Sweetheart, the senior champion and reserve grand champion; Joe Schwartzbeck with Peace and Plenty Counselor Tonla-ET, the reserve intermediate champion;

Shannon Harrison with C Arlanda Starb Zobe, the intermediate and grand champion; Amy Iager with Tri-Day Jenny Jones, the reserve junior champion; and Ryan Savage with Chip Savage's junior champion, Savage-Leigh Lead Chrissy.

Zobe Tops Maryland Spring Show

KAREN BUTLER
 Maryland Correspondent
 TIMONIUM, Md. — C Arlanda Starb Zobe, a senior three-year-old Starbuck daughter owned by Paul "Butch" Harrison III and Billy Gregg, took grand champion honors at the Maryland Spring Holstein show. The show was held in Timonium at the State fairgrounds on April 13.

"She just developed and matured into a real nice cow," said Butch of the purchased animal, which was also named the Intermediate Champion in the open class, and had the 2nd best udder in her Three-Year-Old class. She was All Maryland senior two-year-old and made 20,000 pounds of milk in 1995. Butch, his parents Paul and Susan, and sister Shannon milk 100 head at their Dun-Loafin Farm in Burkittsville, Frederick County.

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