

Maryland Sheep Exported To The Caribbean

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Lewis R. Riley has announced that Debnam Sales & Exports of Still Pond, Maryland, recently sold sheep and hogs to Trinidad and Tobago.

The company is owned by George Debnam and has been developing an export market for beef cattle, hogs and hair-type sheep.

Twenty-six Katahdin sheep and three hogs were flown to Trinidad on Nov. 23. The average price of a Katahdin sheep is \$750 delivered.

Working closely with Debnam Sales & Exports and the Ministry

of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and United States Livestock Genetic Export, Inc. ar-

ranged the sale as part of their ongoing effort to improve the genetic bloodlines of sheep in Trinidad and Tobago.

Several of the Katahdin sheep will be included in a research program at the University of the West Indies. The University is inter-

ested in documenting the genetic superiority of the Katahdin and will be using sheep purchased from Debnam Sales & Exports in their evaluation process.

NFU's Swenson Named To Commission on 21st Century Agriculture

DENVER, CO. — President Bill Clinton has named National Farmers Union (NFU) President Leland Swenson to the Commission on 21st Century Production Agriculture. Swenson is one of the president's three appointees to the commission, which was mandated in the Federal Agriculture Improvements and Reform Act of 1996 (FAIR).

"I am extremely honored to have been named to serve on this commission which will review the impact of the FAIR legislation on producers' incomes, production options and marketing opportunities," Swenson said.

NFU members view the sweeping changes of the latest farm bill as a mixed bag. Swenson said most producers he represents like the planting flexibility, but the price volatility of commodities over the past two years has made it difficult to make long-term decisions for their operations. The farm leader also noted that all proposals made during the farm bill debate included flexibility in planting decisions.

NFU's recommendation during the 1996 farm bill debate included a marketing loan program that would enable producers to get their income from the market. NFU has opposed decoupling, or disassociation of government payments from production, such as those provided under FAIR. "We must be sure the tools of any farm bill empower producers to enhance their incomes through the market and not via systems which only empower the already very concentrated market system," Swenson said.

"This commission will be the primary vehicle for recommending policy to Congress and the Clinton administration. It is vitally important to producers," Swenson said.

Swenson will urge the commission to recommend raising commodity loan rates, which were frozen at artificially low 1995 levels. He will also support reintroduction of a farmer-owned reserve program to safeguard against shortages, both domestically and for the United States' reputation as a reliable supplier of high-quality grain for its foreign grain buyers.

In addition, Swenson intends to call for risk management measures promised under FAIR. "We were promised that as government supports decreased, producers would have an opportunity to participate in federal risk management programs, but that hasn't fully materialized," Swenson said.

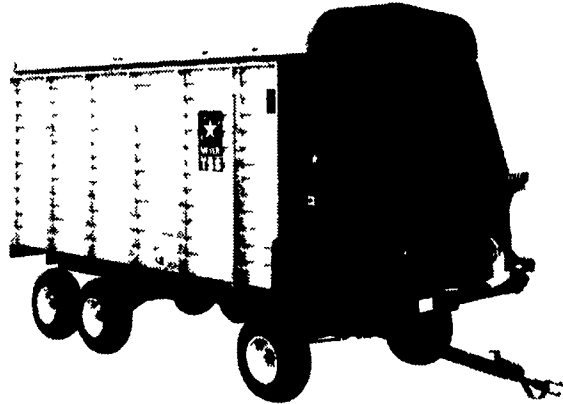
National Farmers union is a general farm organization representing nearly 30,000 family farmers and ranchers nationwide. NFU serves it membership by assisting with education, by providing stimulus and know-how for farmer-owned cooperatives and by presenting the organization's policies to lawmakers at the local, state and national levels.

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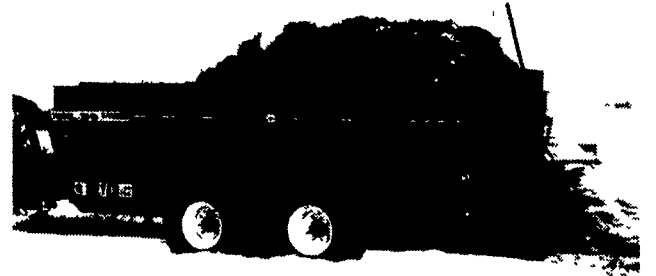
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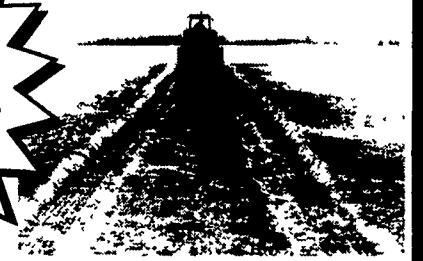
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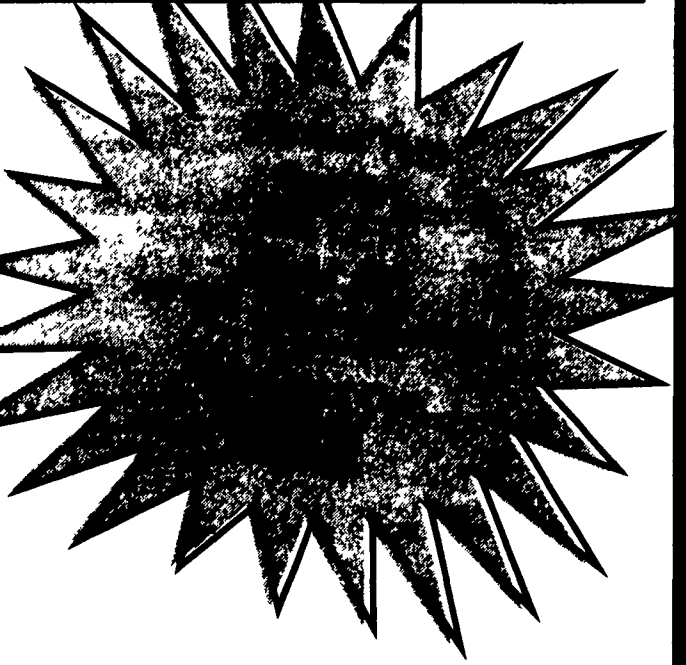
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