

Pa. State Grange Supports Legislation

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania State Grange is asking state House of Representatives members to pass two bills that would strengthen the agricultural industry and the profitability of family farms.

Brenda Shambaugh, PA State Grange legislative director, said the Grange seeks passage of House Bill 9, the Agricultural Loan Forgiveness Program. The program reduces the amount of a Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) loan if an agricultural college graduate returns to a family farm or if a veterinary school graduate goes into a large animal practice.

"The Agricultural Loan Forgiveness Program has helped many students return to the agricultural arena," Shambaugh said. "The program has made it possible for young farmers and veterinarians to stay in rural areas where they are needed to enhance production agriculture."

The Pennsylvania State Grange, with over 30,000 members is an agricultural, rural and community service organization dedicated to improving life in Pennsylvania through legislative action, community work and providing member services.

Shambaugh said HB9, which is currently on the House calendar for consideration, is an extremely important piece of legislation.

"Since the farming community is drastically dwindling, we believe the continuation of agricultural loan forgiveness is vital to the profitability of our state's number one industry," Shambaugh said. "The fabric of rural Pennsylvania relies on a strong agricultural economy."

Shambaugh said the Grange supports HB 1573, which covers three different issues. Shambaugh said passage of the bill would: add aquaculture to the definition of an agricultural commodity under the

PA Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act; require the Department of Agriculture to pay poultry producers the same amount of indemnity if they are afflicted with avian influenza whether they voluntarily depopulate or if their birds are condemned; and change the definition of garbage to rectify a problem the United States Department of Agriculture had with the current Pennsylvania definition.

"All of these issues will be of great benefit to the agricultural community," Shambaugh said. "We strongly urge the Legislature to pass these two bills."

Shambaugh said HB 1573 is on the House calendar for concurrence of Senate amendments.

Shambaugh said Grangers will present their views on these two state bills and other pertinent issues at the annual Grange Week celebration, a legislative event sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Grange in Harrisburg on April 27.

Mid-Am Finishes Business,

(Continued from Page A22)

As of January 1, 1998, the focus of the DFA has been to organize a national and international presence for the dairy industry while utilizing the economics of scale. "Small in the country, big in town," has become the summary statement to signify the many connections to local dairymen while presenting the force of numbers in marketing and political endeavors.

DFA has set up headquarters in Kansas City. They have members in 42 states, coast to coast and border to border. DFA products are sold in every state and are exported internationally. They operate 40 manufacturing plants in the U.S.

and produce a wide variety of dairy products including: American and Italian cheeses, cultured dairy products, coffee creamers, butter, in-can sterilized infant and adult nutrition products; dehydrated products; nonfat dry milk; dried whey products; ground, shredded and diced cheeses; long shelf-life dairy products, and cheese sauces.

DFA participates in several joint ventures that serve fluid milk and dairy product markets. The cooperative has a state-of-the-art product development center in Springfield, Missouri, that includes research and development laboratories for new dairy products.

Herman Brubaker, a dairy farmer from West Alexandria, Ohio, has been named chairman of the board.

Attention Veterans

The President of the U.S. has recently signed into law a bill that affects all veterans. This law states that if a veteran has not registered at a Veterans Affairs Hospital since Oct. 1, 1996, then on Oct. 1, 1998 he or she will lose all medical benefits for life.

To make it worse, the V.A. cannot notify veterans about it. Information must be disseminated via word of mouth or by letter. The local V.A. office recommends that everyone eligible for benefits

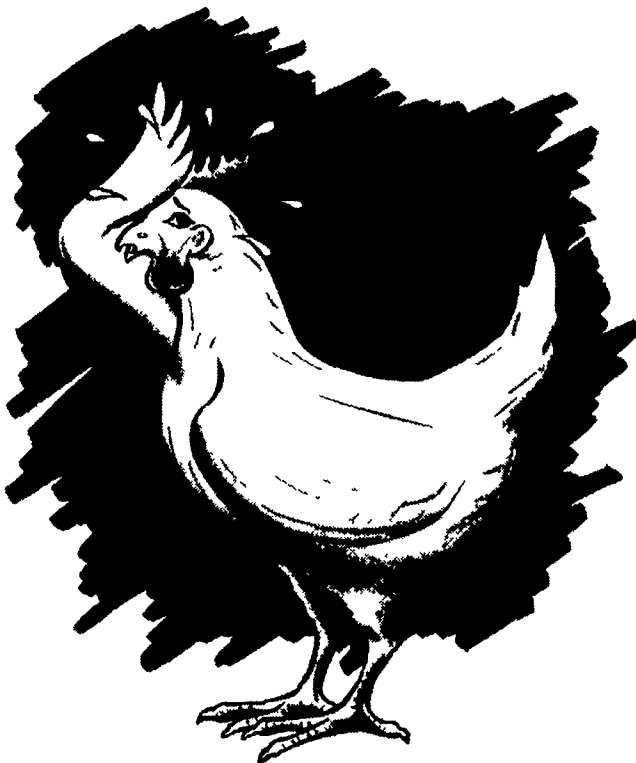
come by their office, and sign up prior to the October 1st deadline, regardless of whether they have received treatment at a V.A. hospital since 10/01/96. This way no one will slip through the cracks. Veterans need to bring their DD-214 identification. It will only take about 5 minutes to complete the form.

If you cannot locate your DD-214, go to the V.A. office and they can help you obtain a copy.

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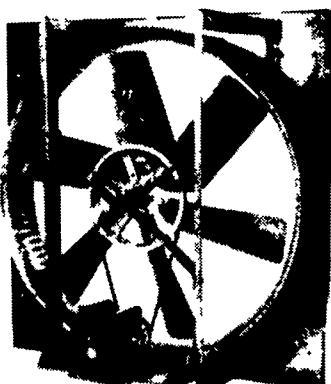


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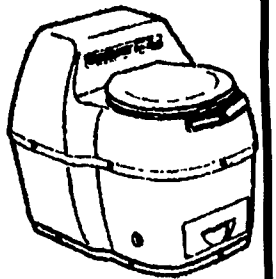
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