

Pennsylvania State Grange Asks For Continuation Of Premium

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) - A member of the Pennsylvania State Grange's Dairy Committee asked members of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board Wednesday to continue the over-order premium of 80 cents per hundred-weight due to the ongoing dairy crisis across the Commonwealth.

Robert Pardoe Sr., who farms 360 acres and has a dairy herd of 150 animals in Northumberland County, told the PMMB that higher feed costs coupled with lower milk prices is driving farmers in his area out of business.

"To emphasize the serious financial situation of dairy farmers in Pennsylvania," Pardoe

told the board at a hearing in the PA Department of Agriculture, "There are three dairy herds that have recently been dispersed. Additionally, there is another one scheduled for same and a fifth herd where one partner left for other employment. These are not retirees, but young established farmers. It is clear that all the

factors the board considered in establishing an over-order premium of 80 cents are still extremely accurate."

As an advocate for rural Pennsylvania, the Grange is a leading force in agricultural and rural issues. The Grange, with over 30,000 members in every county, is a rural, agricultural and community service organization dedicated to improving the lives of rural Pennsylvanians through legislative action, offering member services and participating in community affairs.

The Grange has actively participated in raising the price paid to dairy farmers during this continuing financial crisis. In September 1996 the Grange successfully helped raise the over-order premium from 50 to 80 cents, and in Sept. 1997 worked to raise it from 80 to \$1.20. The first increase of 30 cents and the second of 40 cents are set to expire on April 30. The 40-cent increase was granted

temporarily after an emergency hearing held at the request of the Grange due to the Drought of 1997.

Pardoe said that dairy farmers face numerous uncertainties and that the premium adds some stability to their industry.

"The expansion of the federal orders and what it will mean to our pricing system is still dubious," Pardoe said. "The new proposed United States Department of Agriculture pricing and the proposed floor under the basic formula price is still under consideration. Also, there is some increase in production in Pennsylvania making premiums more difficult to negotiate."

The over-order premium on Wednesday was the first of two hearings the Grange was testifying at concerning dairy issues this week. A second hearing, set for Williamsport on Friday is being held to gather testimony on the creation of a dairy compact for pricing Class I fluid milk in this state.

Equine Clinic At Mountain Springs

SHARTLESVILLE (Berks Co.) - More than 50 area horse owners attended the Equine Educational Clinic on March 14 here at the Mountain Springs Rodeo Arena Sale Barn.

Sponsored by Mountain View Supply, Inc., Shartlesville, the seminar featured Julie D. Buzby, D.V.M., of Mountain Shadow Veterinary Clinic, Schuylkill Haven, and Dr. Harold Wade, representing Fort Dodge Pharmaceuticals, Johnson City,

Tenn.

Horse enthusiasts enjoyed a free lunch, many free product samples, and a chance to question new equine products appearing on the market and emergency care of the horse.

The newest dewormer on the market, Quest, was the main topic of discussion. Quest is gaining popularity because of the ability to control parasite populations with only a four-time-a-year use, according to Dr.

Harold Wade.

Dr. Julie Buzby provided handouts to all participants as reference for first-aid kit suggestions for horses as well as slides depicting emergency situations and first-aid tips. Discussions centered on severe bleeding, colic, and lacerations.

Company representatives were on hand to answer questions. A wide variety of feed samples were available.

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