## Farmland Industries Announces \$49 Million Special Distribution

WICHITA, Kan. — The nation's largest farmer-owned cooperative will return an additional \$49 million in a special equity redemption to members this week, its chief executive announced during the Kansas Governor's Conference on Agriculture.

Farmland Industries president and chief executive officer H.D. "Harry" Cleberg reported that the cooperative's board of directors has approved distributing \$49 million to nearly 1,000 local farmerowned cooperatives and more than 8000 independent livestock producers in 39 states. The special redemption is in addition to \$57.5 million paid to members in cash patronage and equity redemptions in December 1997, after Farmland's fiscal year closed. It brings total disbursements to Farmland members to more than \$300 million over the past five years.

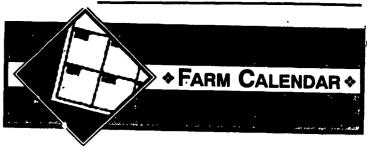
"This is the first time in our 70-year history that we've made a cash distribution in addition to the regular fiscal year distribution," reported Cleberg. "In just three months, we have returned more than \$100 million to our members."

Cleberg said the special redemption was a decision made by Farmland's board of directors to help maintain proportionality in its base capital plan which is designed to assure that Farmland's member-ownership is proportional to their business volume. A significant number of overfunded members will receive checks in varying amounts consistent with this principle.

Farmland's membership, consisting of 1,400 local farmerowned cooperatives and 13,000 independent livestock producers, earns equity in Farmland, not by purchasing shares but by doing business through Farmland, either by buying agricultural inputs or by selling livestock and grain. Farmland allocates its profits back to these owners in the form of patronage refunds, paid partly in cash and partly in equity. The announcement reflects a payout of a significant amount of overfunded equity.

"This is a sign of Farmland's strength and commitment to its members," said Cleberg. "Let there be no question: Farmland truly is 'proud to be farmerowned'."

Farmland Industries, Inc. Kansas City, Mo., is the largest farmer-owned cooperative in North America and one of the top 200 Fortune 500-listed companies. In 1997, company sales of \$9.1 billion encompassed all 50 states and 80 countries. When including third-party sales of Farmland's venture businesses and the gross sales of its international grain marketing subsidiary, total sales exceeded \$11.7 billion.



## (Continued from Page A10)

Meeting, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Lackawanna/Wyoming County Extension Spring Fling Seminar, Keystone College, LaPlume, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Grant Writing Workshop For Nonprofit Organizations, County Office Building, Montrose, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Wednesday, May 6

Thursday, May 7 Lancaster County FFA Leadership School, Lancaster Mennonite High School. Friday, May 8

## Saturday, May 9

Capitol Area Beekeepers Associa-

tion Short Course, Dauphin County Agricultural and Natural Resources Center, Dauphin, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and May 16, Milton Hershey School Farm Conference Center and Apiary, Hershey, 1 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

- 24th Annual Western Pa. Sheep and Club Lamb Sale, Mercer County 4-H Park, Mercer, 6 p.m.
- Eastern Shore Spring 4-H/FFA Show, Centreville, Md.
- Managing Your Small Pond Workshop, Dave and Elaine Brown's Farm, Lemon, 9 a.m.-noon.

Sunday, May 10 Happy Mother's Day!

