

## Pennsylvania State Grange Praises Dairy Farmers

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania State Grange is proud to recognize the accomplishments of dairy farmers as the organization continues to work to increase producers' profitability.

"With June being recognized as national and state dairy month, the Pennsylvania State Grange congratulates dairy farmers and their families for providing nutritious foods while pumping over \$15 billion into the state's economy," William Steel, Pennsylvania State Grange president, said. "The Pennsylvania State Grange reaffirms its commitment to be a voice for the dairy industry in legislative affairs."

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 66 counties, is a rural, agricultural and community service organization dedicated to improving the lives of Pennsylvanians through legislative action, offering member services and participating in community affairs.

The Grange recently was successful in convincing the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board to continue the over-order premium of 80 cents per hundredweight due to the ongoing dairy crisis across the Commonwealth.

"Dairy farming is an occupation that is vital to the structure and very survival of the family farm," Steel said. "Working to preserve it is a paramount issue for a family-based organization like the Grange."

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 50-80 cents, and in September 1997 the Grange successfully helped raise the over-order premium from 50 to 80 cents, and in September 1997, worked to raise it from 80 cents to \$1.20. The additional 40-cent increase, which expired April 30, 1998, was granted temporarily after an emergency hearing held at the request of the Grange due to the Drought of 1997.

"Dairy farmers face numerous uncertainties and that premium at least adds some financial stability to a very volatile industry," Steel said. "Let's face it, a profitable farm is a key to the economic well being of rural America. We will work to ensure that we maintain the financial health of our rural area."

The Grange is also pleased with a recommendation from Congress to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Dan Glickman urging adoption of Option 1A of the Federal Milk Marketing Orders reform process. A total of 238 House members and 61 Senators signed a letter strongly urging Glickman to select that plan.

Option 1A would basically maintain the current system of calculating Class 1 differentials paid to producers. The option recognizes the need to price fluid milk regionally and to consider items such as transportation costs and supply and demand needs.

"There is no question that this letter sends a clear message

to Glickman telling him how important it is to maintain the current structure of Class 1 differentials," Tom Rugg, Director of Legislative Affairs at the

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — In recognition of Dairy Month, the president of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau recently saluted the efficiency and perseverance of Pennsylvania dairymen.

"Being a dairy farmer is a seven-days-a-week, year-round job. On top of the hard work comes the formidable challenges within the industry which dairymen have faced and will continue to encounter," said PFB president Guy Donaldson. "But through it all the dairy industry in Pennsylvania has continued to grow."

While the number of dairymen in Pennsylvania declined by 300 to total 10,200 in 1997, "that decline is in line with a general trend of consolidation in the industry in Pennsylvania over the last 15 years," Donaldson said. "At the same time, statewide milk production continues to increase." Milk production totaled 10.7 billion pounds in 1997 — up from 10.6 billion pounds in 1996 and 10.4 billion pounds the year before.

"Just a few years ago, Pennsylvania was the fifth largest milk producing state in the nation. Today, we're number four behind California, Wisconsin and New York," Donaldson said. "Pennsylvania now stands a good chance of overtaking New York in the third place spot."

Right now, things are "looking up" for Pennsylvania dairymen, Donaldson said.

"As we head into summer, the outlook for milk prices is good. Cheese prices, which dictate the direction milk checks at the farm will take, have rebounded," he said. "This is largely due to El Nino's effect in holding milk production in check in California. Barring any weather disasters here, a favorable outlook is forecast for Pennsylvania dairymen for the remainder of the year."

Donaldson said that no one can deny the challenges dairymen have faced due to increasingly squeezed profit margins. "Dairymen have responded to a remarkable degree by producing more milk with fewer cows," Donaldson said. "It's amazing to think that all the commercial dairymen in the entire United States could be put into Penn State's Beaver Stadium, which has a seating capacity of around 94,000, without any need for expanding the stadium."

According to figures compiled by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, the value of Pennsylvania's dairy production totaled \$1.67 billion in 1996 — 14 percent higher than the year before. Meanwhile, cow numbers statewide dropped to 639,000 last year. That was a decline of 5,000 cows from the year before.

Looking at the challenges facing the industry, Donaldson said, "Dairymen are still struggling with the issue of how to capture a larger portion of the consumer dollar. It seems that the dairyman's share has not kept up with the higher price being commanded

National Grange, said. "Pennsylvania Grangers, in conjunction with the other 36 Grange states, were instrumental in informing their legislators

about the Grange's support of Option 1A."

The Pennsylvania State Grange urges all citizens to help farmers celebrate dairy month by enjoying their favorite dairy

product(s)—whether it be a refreshing tall glass of milk, cheese on a sandwich or a delicious bowl of ice cream on a hot summer day.

## PA Farm Bureau Salutes Pennsylvania Dairy Farmers

by the new convenience and 'niche' dairy products now on the market."

As it has in the past, Farm Bureau continues to work in the legislative and regulatory arenas to help dairymen improve their net profits.

In the past year Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has testified before the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board for Class I milk over-order

prices, has recommended provisions beneficial to Pennsylvania producers in USDA's federal order restructuring proposal, and has supported legislation to bring Pennsylvania into the Northeast Dairy Compact.

"We firmly believe that a strong dairy industry is vital to the future of agriculture in Pennsylvania," said Donaldson. "We've worked not only to help improve profits, but to control costs through local

tax reform, and by keeping a lid on unnecessary and potentially costly environmental and food safety regulations. These are Farm Bureau efforts which benefit all of agriculture, including Pennsylvania's dairymen."

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is a voluntary, statewide farm organization which represents nearly 26,000 farm and rural families in 54 county farm bureaus.

## Pennsylvania Farm Show Receives National Special Events Honor

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ing little country shows. They went to where established crowds were and sold to tens of thousands of people," Davis said.

"That's why you see other people (and businesses) drawing off of those (established and well-respected) events."

And while 90 percent of the special events are organized and operated by non-professionals, he did note the increase in "traveling shows," usually operated by exhibition companies that attempt to slice away at the broad scope events by claiming to be specialized interest events.

Outdoor activities, such as bass fishing and deer hunting, have experienced the phenomenon of traveling shows in recent years, aimed at novices and highlighted with "stars" and trained or experienced stage entertainers and promoters.

They generally teach little beyond information already available free at a public library, in numerous books, at the local Extension office or land grant universities, or through a local non-profit organization.

Such types of "traveling shows" have been cropping up in other industries — there are traveling shows that deal with an individual's personal growth, selling real estate, setting up small businesses, leadership development, financial well-being (how to get rich quick), and various "shows" sometimes called seminars and workshops. Davis said he is familiar with the Farm Show, though his experience is limited. He was a student at the Milton Hershey Schools in Hershey from 1968 to 1971 and visited the Farm Show.

"I went to Milton Hershey School, and lived in Philadelphia, and remember going to Farm Show," he said.

He said that, in his opinion and that of the editorial staff, the state Farm Show's greatness comes from its representation of the diversity of Pennsylvania's agricultural industry and community — from its varied livestock, crops and crafts and living skills displays and competitions, youth shows and open division shows, educational displays and commercial exhibitors.

"It has everything agricultural, from 'A' to 'Z.' You can find everything you want to know, so the commercial aspect is very important.

"All of that makes it a well-rounded event. It's the showcase for new equipment and the small business. That's a big part of it.

"The rodeo (doesn't weigh in award consideration) that much. If (the Farm Show) were a pure livestock show, it would have as much impact, if not more," he said. "The rodeo is entertainment. The livestock shows, for kids this is their future, their career, and they're looking for recognition deserved. Whether it's women baking pies, or growing corn, it's something important to this country. I know, speaking for myself and others on the editorial board, we feel this is more important than the rodeo aspect of it."

He said that when the state Farm Show was reviewed for award consideration, Grumbine was not informed.

"Rather than get a tour and be shown the hot spots, we like to experience the same as any other visitor. Traditionally, if we want to meet with the people who run the event, will go through the event and then meet with (show leadership)."

Davis said the award reviewers enjoyed their time in Harrisburg.

"It seemed like everyone (at the Farm Show) was very happy and there were positive events," he said.

For Davis, the Farm Show also represents a quality show accessible to all people, not just those with lots of expendable cash.

"Many events used to be free, now you have to pay for everything.

"What's nice about the Farm

Show, it's very reasonable and the people going through it were whole families, and it's been a tradition that most likely will continue.

To actually determine its award winners, Davis said the editorial staff and all members of the Events Alliance vote.

According to Davis, the criteria looked at includes: longevity of the event, what it means for the community, whether it's a farm show or festival, if it has ties and benefits to non-profitable organizations such as 4-H, how management treats the event (for example, does the management look at the event the same year after year without changes for society changes?), and how friendly the people are who run the event.

Davis said that he has found that many times, if the people managing an event are not friendly, that attitude gets passed on throughout the event down to the people walking through.

He said that at some events those who attend actually get treated in a rough fashion. He said he has been at events with unbelievable rudeness and intimidation with too visible and unnecessary security. "You get the feeling of being intimidated, that you're not there for a good time, but you're being watched by big brother."

While there have some minor occasional problems with behavior of visitors at the Farm Show, the Pa. State Police and Farm Show security have managed to keep a low profile while helping people enjoy their day without fear of personal safety.

## IH Collectors To Combine Shows

WAYNE TOWNSHIP, Ohio — The International Harvester Collectors of Western Pennsylvania Chapter #16, Inc., will be having a combined show this year with Ohio Chapter #6.

It is the first joint venture of two state chapters of the national association. It will be held July 3-5 at the Ashtabula County Antique Equipment Club Inc., Show-

grounds, located four miles east of Ohio Rt. 11 on Rt. 322.

On display will be tractors, implements, trucks, scouts, and numerous related "IH" items.

For more information, contact Jim Shutt, (724) 573-4404; Jerry Leek, (330) 929-0940; Jean Bauman, (724) 538-5477; or Bill Swope, (419) 655-2945.



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