

## Bureau Meets, Passes Resolutions

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Maryland Correspondent

WALKERSVILLE, Md. — Charles Smith, Jefferson, is the new president of the Frederick County Farm Bureau. Smith and other officers and directors were elected during the 77th annual dinner meeting of the Farm Bureau at the firehall in Walkersville. About 325 people attended the event.

Smith will take over the position vacated by outgoing president Michael Wilcom. John Bell will be the new first vice president, and Charles Black will be the second vice president. Don Easterday will continue to serve as secretary-treasurer.

New directors elected for the five areas of the county are group 1 - Harold Lenhart, Sr.; group 2 - Gordon Flickinger; group 3 - Linwood Offutt, Jr.; group 4 - Mehrl Mayne, Jr.; and group 5 - Leon Remsburg.

Steven Weber, president of Maryland Farm Bureau, commended the Frederick County members for surpassing their membership quota and registering a membership of more than 1,100. "We have been in a three-year membership slide, and your work really came to our aid," said Weber. Laura Ruhlman, Farm Bureau field representative, called Frederick County "an example for every other county" in their membership initiative.

Weber summed up the past year's legislative efforts as a mixed bag. "We got a very important dairy bill passed, and the right-to-farm ordinance." Those were very positive pieces of legislation. But the mandatory nutrient management bill that was passed went a little overboard, according to president Weber. "We're people that take these problems seriously. Agriculture has tried to be responsible. We know we have a job to do as far as nutrient management. Unfortunately, we're going to wind up with a burden of regulatory responsibilities. I think they did the right thing by addressing nutrient management, but I think they just went a little bit overboard," said Weber.

United States representative Roscoe Bartlett attended the meeting, and was presented with the first ever "Friend of the Farmer" Farm Bureau Award. Bartlett said he considers himself a fellow farmer.

Representative Bartlett credited Thomas Jefferson's ideas on agrarian society as ideals we should not lose sight of today. Bartlett linked Jefferson's ideas to today's concerns with urban sprawl, farmland preservation, and profitable agriculture.

"He wanted a country that was essentially an agrarian society, with just enough cities to produce the equipment necessary for farming," said Bartlett. "He didn't want his new country to be blighted by the decadence of cities. Now our challenge is to keep what we've got. Now we're challenged at every level of government to keep what we've got. Thomas Jefferson was right — a nation that loses its agricultural base has lost a very valuable resource. We've got to turn something around so that agriculture and the stability it provides will be around in the future."

Frederick County commissioners were also honored during the evening program for their support of agriculture. Mark Hoke, chair of the commissioners, accepted a plaque presented by Michael Wilcom in appreciation of the commissioners' efforts in establishing the right-to-farm bill, the free day for farmers at the landfill, and the haylift. The haylift, started last year to help farmers during drought years, was given matching funds of \$20,000 by the commissioners to buy hay. Hoke said that supporting the haylift was one issue where the commissioners all voted unanimously, and said that in itself was something to celebrate.

Larry Howard spoke to the group on the Farm Bureau lime program. The lime program makes hydrated, pharmaceutical grade lime available to farmers. The lime is a by product from refining Domino sugar. One ton of the lime is 26 percent calcium oxide, and is equivalent to applying 1/2 ton of regular lime, said Howard. There is a 23-25 ton minimum order, and prices vary with the distance from Baltimore, starting at 3.40 per ton. It is not necessary to be a Farm Bureau member to get the lime, and so far more than 24,000 tons have been ordered. For each ton ordered, Frederick County Farm Bureau gets 10 cents. Howard can be reached at (301) 662-8547 for more information.

Gold star awards were presented to the following members by Mark Zuzik, Farm Bureau administrator; Franklin Gladhill - public affairs; William Fouche - membership; Charles C. Smith - national affairs; Marie Geisinger - information; Louise Stup - women's committee; Scott Hipkins - young farmers; Elwood Hipkins - discussion group; Joe Free - service to member; and Nick Nicholson - service to member.

The women's committee elected officers and directors. Remaining in office as officers are Louise Stup, chairperson;



Officers and directors of Frederick County Farm bureau. From left, Charles C. Smith, president; John Bell, first vice president; Charles Black, second vice president; Leon Remsburg, director of group 5; Gordon Flickinger, director of group 2; Linwood Offutt, director of group 5; Gordon Flickinger, director of group 2; Linwood Offutt, director of group 3; Don Easterday, secretary-treasurer; and Harold Lenhart, director of group 1. Mehrl Mayne, elected as director of group 4, was not in attendance.

Evelyn Wilcom, vice chairperson; Terrie Stup, recording secretary; and Louise Ediger, treasurer. Directors elected for the five regional groups are group 1 - Brenda Nowell; group 2 - Cindy Rhoderick; group 3 - Joanne Guyton; group 4 - Hane Smith; and group 5 - Audrey Wolfe.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to: Trego Zimmerman, past first vice president; Gordon Flickinger, retiring second vice president; Donald Lenhart, retiring board member; Charles Black, retiring from the board of directors; Bill Fouche, membership; David Haker, board of directors; John Burrier, board of directors; and Michael Wilcom, retiring president of Frederick County Farm Bureau.

New resolutions adopted by the Frederick County Farm bureau include those to support a BFP price for milk of \$14.50, to delete the word "contiguous" from dairy compact legislation,



Mark Hoke, chair of the Frederick County board of commissioners by Michael Wilcom for their support of agriculture.

to support the Dept. of Agriculture Export Incentive program and Fast Track, to waive or modify the cattle sale checkoff, to oppose phosphorous-based nutrient management plans until more research is done, to control wildlife, to sup-

port the protection of property rights, to encourage deer carcass use by charities, to lessen restrictions on farm trucks, to urge the government to abide by noxious weed control laws on government owned lands, and to protect insurance coverage by "Act of God" losses.

## Don't Fear Dairy Options Pilot Contract

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — Dairy farmers receiving letters from the U.S. Department of Agriculture concerning the upcoming Dairy Options Pilot Program (DOPP) shouldn't fear signing a "contract" included in the letter, according to a Penn State University agriculture economics specialist.

According to Bob Parsons, a Penn State agricultural economist, the contract is not a binding document requiring participation in the program. It does not require any commitment by farmers with an interest in the program.

The contract is essentially a registration form to attend one of the county-level producer meetings scheduled to be held the first week in January.

It should be considered the same as a meeting registration form.

He said, "Do not reject the letter upon opening it. Stop and consider that if you want to learn about (dairy) options, this is a great opportunity. If you have any questions, call the local extension office."

In order to transition dairy producers away from federal commodity support programs, and to provide them with tools for man-

aging their business risk, a number of sources have recommended purchasing options on production, as a means for controlling profit extremes — up and down.

While dairy producers are currently receiving relatively high prices for milk and input prices have dropped — grain prices have dropped tremendously — the lack of governmental price-stabilizing programs allows supply and demand swings in producer prices, and that puts producers at high risk of failing to cash flow debt during low-price periods.

The dairy options pilot program is part of a national test to determine if farmers can use actual options contracts successfully to manage price.

The program is designed so that those who are eligible to participate are more or less to be held harmless during the pilot period.

Participating counties have been announcing scheduled informational meetings to be held the first week of January.

Contact a local extension office for more information.

In Pennsylvania, participating counties are Berks, Bradford, Crawford, Chester, Franklin and Lancaster.

In New York, counties are Chautaugua, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, St. Lawrence, Steuben.

Other states involved with the pilot program are California, Minnesota, Texas, Vermont and Wisconsin.

The program is for producers in eligible counties who produce at least 100,000 pounds of milk over a six-month period, as well as licensed brokers who are in good standing with the National Futures Association.

The purpose of DOPP is to help farmers manage price risk. The program is to offer producers firsthand experience in trading options contracts for a period of six to eight months.

Options contracts create for the producer a price floor by providing the right, but not obligation, to sell at a specified price.



Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, was honored with the first-ever "Friend of the Farmer" Award from Farm Bureau.

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