

Dairylea Co-op Expresses Gratitude For Compact Bills

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Dairylea Cooperative leadership this week commended lawmakers of both the New York State Senate and the New York State Assembly for recent passing of legislation authorizing New York to join the Northeast Dairy Compact.

Additionally, the Cooperative leadership expressed gratitude to New York Gov. George Pataki for bringing the Compact to the forefront of legislative issues.

"We have taken a major step forward in this measure of price and income protection for New York dairy farmers, which is already enjoyed by dairy farmers in the neighboring New England states," said Dairylea President Clyde Rutherford.

"We applaud the actions of our legislators and the Governor

and thank them for listening to our concerns about the future of dairy farming in the state," he said.

The Northeast Dairy Compact is a formal agreement among the six new England States, enacted through state legislation and approved by Congress. It allows for the creation of a commission that has the authority to regulate the price of fluid milk in the region.

The purpose of the Compact is to assure the continued viability of dairy farming in the Northeast and to assure consumers of an adequate, local supply of pure and wholesome milk.

The action by the New York Legislature authorizes New York to join the existing Compact, which has been in operation since July 1997.

"Dairylea and other major cooperatives and farmer organizations have been working diligently this entire year to gain legislators' support of the Compact," said Rutherford. "We are gratified by the result of our collectible efforts. This illustrates what can be accomplished when the industry works together."

While Gov. Pataki has indicated he will sign the legislation into law, Rutherford said additional work must be done, as Congress must give its consent before New York can join the existing Compact.

"Our focus now moves to Washington, where we already have been having discussions with key Congressional leaders on the importance of New York joining the Northeast Compact,"

said Rutherford. "As cooperatives and other organizations continue working together on behalf of New York's dairy farmers, we are optimistic on getting approval from Congress."

In addition, Rutherford said efforts will be intensified to persuade Pennsylvania lawmakers to pass Compact legislation in that state.

"New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are all part of a common milk shed serving the largest consumer market on the East Coast. With New York and New Jersey already positioned to join the Compact, it is very important that dairy farmers in Pennsylvania have the same

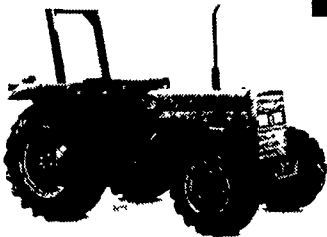
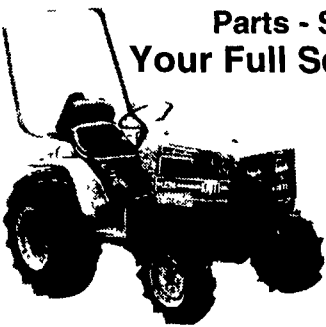
income safety net as their neighbors to the north and east," he said.

Dairylea Cooperative Inc. is a Syracuse-based, agricultural service organization, cooperatively owned by more than 2,600 dairy farmers located throughout the Northeast. It markets 5 billion pounds of milk annually and participates, and is invested, in a milk marketing network stretching from Maine to Maryland to Ohio. Additionally, Dairylea — through its subsidiary, Agri-Throughs, LLC — provides a wide array of insurance, lending and leasing investment, buying and risk management services for dairy farmers.

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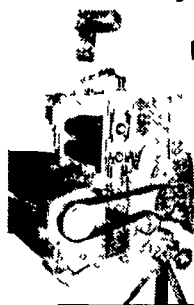
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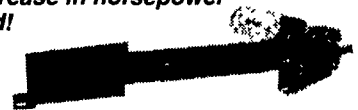
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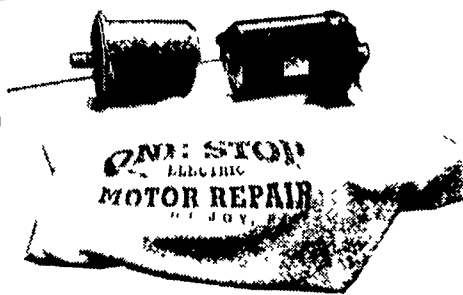
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