

Keystone Farm Credit Reports Another Strong Year

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Lancaster Farming Staff

NEW HOLLAND (Lancaster Co.) — Keystone Farm Credit had an outstanding year with an earnings increase of 22 percent from last year to more than \$6.5 million.

That's not the only good news. According to the financial services cooperative's president, the association took advantage of funds allocated by the association to ensure automated and other services are year 2000-ready.

"We will continue to test to ensure (the system) moves smoothly into the next century," said Philip W. Kimmel, president of the cooperative.

Kimmel spoke Tuesday night to approximately 575 patrons and friends at the annual stockholders' meeting at Yoder's Restaurant in New Holland.

This was the second consecutive year for the earnings increase. The amount of new loans increased 6 percent. Kimmel outlined several other factors which contributed to a good year for the cooperative.

Key capitol net worth continued

to grow. This month, \$5.4 million, representing more than 18 percent of the amount of interest earned by the association on borrower loans in 1998, will be returned to the cooperative's stockholders as patronage.

Patronage refund is 20 percent higher than 1997.

Kimmel said that checks will be mailed to stockholders "sometime next week," and will be paid as follows: 30 percent of the refund will be paid to each stockholder in cash. The remaining 70 percent will be held by the association as allocated surplus.

In the financial statement available at the meeting, Kimmel noted in his message that "it is the board's intent to revolve or pay the 1998 allocated surplus after five years," he wrote.

"During this time, these proceeds are used to help the association maintain a sound financial position and reduce the association's cost of borrowing the funds which we, in turn, loan to our customers."

Kimmel noted that the com-

pany's financial strength continued to grow, pointing to continued growth in the financial management service and real estate appraisal services. The cooperative's alliance with American Express Financial Advisors continues to be an industry model. And adjustments were made to continue the strong position.

To do so, Kimmel noted, some long-term strategies need to be considered. He said that the board is examining the mergers of several Farm Credit boards throughout the region, decisions he said were made to gain efficiency. The board believes customers can be served just as well from other offices.

Kimmel said, "The board is exploring the possibility of mergers with other Farm Credit associations," and noted they are "open to options." But Keystone Farm Credit stockholders will have the final say, he reminded them at the meeting.

Keystone Farm Credit conducted meetings at two separate locations this week, including one

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Philip W. Kimmel, president of the cooperative, left, spoke Tuesday night to approximately 575 patrons and friends at the annual stockholders' meeting at Yoder's Restaurant in New Holland. Marc Hardy, motivational speaker, talked about the importance of looking at the reasons behind all the personal pitfalls that can occur in life.

Farm Credit Elects Directors

AVONDALE (Chester Co.) — Keystone Farm Credit, headquartered here, released the names of new directors elected early this week at two stockholder meetings, one in Fogelsville and the other in New Holland.

In region 1, comprised of Berks Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Pike, and Schuylkill counties, newly elected position 1 director is Kenneth L. Hershey, Oxford. Hershey, farming for 45 years, with 150 acres, serves as vice chairman of the Lower Oxford Township board of supervisors.

In position 2, new director is Rodger L. Wagner, Oley. Wagner, farming for 39 years, has a dairy operation with 180 cows, 150 replacement heifers, and 750 acres of corn, alfalfa, and soybeans. He is a member of the Berks County Dairy Farmers Association and Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Fleetwood Grange, Genex Breeders Cooperative, and others. He serves on the Oley Township Ag Advisory Committee.

In region 2, comprised of Dauphin, Lancaster, and Lebanon counties, newly elected position 1 director is Mervin Sauder, Lititz. Sauder has been farming for 41 years. He has a dairy farm and also feeds hogs and operates a layer house. He is past president of the Lancaster County Holstein Association.

In position 2, Dale R. Hershey, Manheim, was elected director. Hershey has been farming for 19 years. Hershey is a partner in Hershey Brothers, a dairy. They milk 200 cows and farm 500 acres. Hershey is a member of Akron Mennonite Church, Manheim Young Farmers Association, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, and Land O' Lakes Cooperative, where he serves as cooperative unit delegate.

Hershey has served as president and vice president of the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension board and secretary of the Lancaster County DHIA.

Nominating committee election results are: region 1, position 1, Floyd W. Kurtz, Fleetwood, Berks County; position 2, Leon D. Kurtz, Cochranville, Chester County; region 2, position 1, Leon E. Ziegler, Myerstown, Lebanon County; position 2, Earl S. Weaver, New Holland, Lancaster County.

On the ballot for the proposed bylaw change, stockholders voted yes for the bylaws to be amended as presented in the annual meeting information statement.



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