

Pa. State Grange Members Meet With Federal Legislators

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — About 100 Pennsylvania state Grangers visited with their federal legislators during the annual Washington Legislative Tour to discuss issues concerning agriculture and rural affairs.

Among the issues discussed during the recent visit with U.S. Congressmen and senators were dairy compacts, tax reform, health care, rural transportation, and education reform, among others.

The Pennsylvania State Grange, with more than 30,000 members in 450 Grange chapters across the commonwealth, is dedicated to improving the lives of rural Pennsylvanians through legislative action, grass-roots initiatives, community service, and offering member services such as financial planning, a credit union, and insurance programs.

Brenda Shambaugh, Pennsylvania State Grange legislative director, said the Washington tour presents an

opportunity for individual Grange members to voice their position on issued being considered by federal legislators.

"The visit to Washington is also to speak out on behalf of the National Grange's Blueprint for Rural America," Shambaugh said. "The 10-point plan is designed to revitalize and enhance rural America in preparation for the new millennium. The blueprint is part of the National Grange's program called, 'A New Century, A New

Grange".

The Grange believes Congress should authorize the formation of regional dairy compacts to provide a more stable pricing structure for producers and consumers. Reducing the number of milk marketing orders will lead to a more streamlined system of pricing, marketing and distribution of dairy products, as well as better regional accountability.

"Like New England's successful Northeast Dairy Compact, other dairy-producing regions can benefit from the establishment of similar compacts to promote cooperative pricing and marketing systems," Shambaugh said. "The Northeast Dairy Compact, which the Pennsylvania State Grange diligently helped to get created, is a proven success for our neighbors to the north, and we seek the same for Pennsylvania producers."

Shambaugh said the National Grange believes Congress should reform the federal tax system to assure preservation of family farms and businesses through the elimination of estate and capital gains taxes, and institute user taxes to offset costs of federal programs. National Grange officials presented statistics that show that it takes \$3 in costs to collect \$1 of estate tax following an indi-

vidual's death.

"A new system is needed to assure that all wealth bears its just and equal payment to the government," Shambaugh said. "A family farm is a family business and plays a key role in the economic well-being of rural areas across America. The Grange also seeks immediate 100 percent deductibility for health insurance premiums paid by farmers and other self-employed individuals."

Another blueprint issue is the revitalization of rural schools through federal partnerships.

The National Grange supports using federal resources to revitalize rural schools by forming federal/state partnerships to renovate them. The revitalization project should include the provision of federal funds for rural school districts seeking assistance, and could include buying down interest rates on local bonds to finance school construction projects.

"Such partnerships should protect and retain local control, since traditionally, school construction and renovations have been the sole province of state and local governments," Shambaugh said. "Federal partnerships will help improve the health of rural economies, which are often dependent upon a quality learning environment."

Keystone Junior Beef Classic May 27-28

BUTLER (Butler Co.) — The Northwest Keystone Junior Beef Classic is scheduled at the Butler County Fairgrounds Memorial Day Weekend, May 27, 28. This will be the 15th year for the all-breed steer and heifer show that has drawn cattle and exhibitors from five states. It gives youth under 21 years of age and opportunity to enter competition drawn from a larger area than usually seen at the county fairs in which they compete during the summer.

Exhibitors do not have to be 4-H or FFA members to participate. A friendly, helpful atmosphere, along with a very reasonable \$12 entry fee, make this the perfect preview show for beginning showmen.

Preregistration by May 1 is encouraged for inclusion in the show catalog. Late entries will be accepted but will have a \$40 entry fee.

The three day Memorial Day weekend allows Monday for rest and recuperation, since the open cattle show is scheduled on Sunday Saturday's activities begin with the Classic Showmanship Contest at 1 p.m. An educational program featuring the use of ultrasound equipment to analyze cattle will be held later Saturday afternoon,

followed by a pizza party! A trade show featuring businesses that help sponsor the show will be open both days.

Sunday brings the real excitement when the steer and breeding classes are judged. In the heifer show, premiums will be paid for all classes, and trophies will be awarded for grand champion, reserve champion, and bred and owned. Registered heifers will show by breed and commercial classes will be held for unregistered heifers. A prize of \$200 will be awarded to the supreme champion heifer of the show.

The popular county steer classes will again be offered for any county (from any state) that has five or more preregistered steers. County winners will win a jackpot of \$10 times the number of steers shown in the class. Clubs and county groups can easily coordinate plans for the group to participate, and someone from each county will win the jackpot. Last year nine counties had enough entries to have their own jackpot class. There is also an all others division for those not having enough entries for the county class. The county champions will then compete with the all others champion for grand champion steer with a

prize of \$250, and reserve champion steer with a prize of \$100.

The next planning meeting for the classic will be April 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mercer County Extension Center. Any interested persons are invited to participate.

Entry forms will be mailed to past participants. For more information or entry forms, contact your county extension agent or Beth Wingard, e-mail sunrise@usachoice.com or (814) 782-3992, or write Northwest Keystone Junior Beef Classic, c/o Bob Calvert, Mercer County Extension Office, P.O. Box 530, Mercer, PA 16137.

House Passes Freedom To E-File Act

PARK RIDGE, Ill. — The House of Representatives recently passed the Freedom to E-File Act (S. 777), legislation which would allow farmers and ranchers to file paperwork with the USDA electronically.

"As in any other business, advanced technologies and the Internet are becoming increasingly common and important tools for American farmers and ranchers," said Larry Combest (R-Texas).

"This bill will allow farmers to spend more time in the fields with their crops rather than inside doing paperwork."

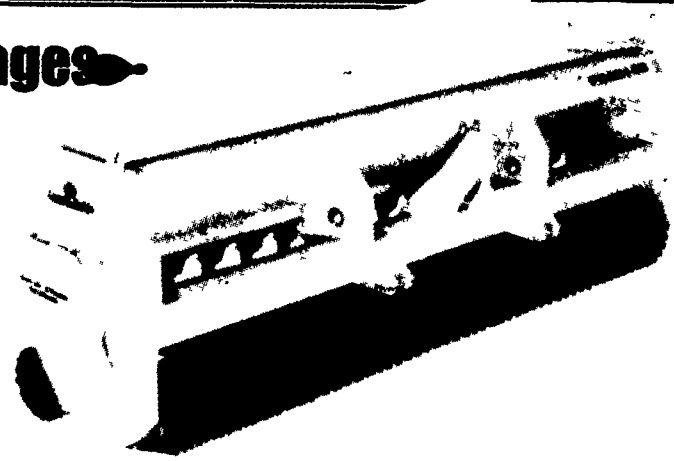
The bill requires the secretary of agriculture to establish an electronic filing and retrieval system to enable the public to

file with USDA all required paperwork electronically. The bill would also allow the public access to information on farm programs, quarterly trade, economic and production reports and other information.

"Federal government agencies must move into the 21st Century and realize the possibilities of the technology revolution," said Rep. Ray LaHood (R-Ill.) who sponsored a similar House measure. "The IRS allows electronic filing, and this year over 34 million Americans will take advantage of the convenience of filing online. America's farmers should be afforded the same opportunity to ease their paperwork burdens when it comes to USDA forms. This legislation will do just that."



Solid advantages in seed placement.



Primary Seeders

- Choose from front or end wheel model
- Vacuum sealed acremeter
- Dual cast iron packer wheels-16" front and 12" rear
- Removable tongue for storage or 3-point operation
- All welded weatherproof seed box with 15 or 30 bushel capacity
- Ideal for alfalfa or sod farmers

Pennsylvania

Betts Equipment
3139 Windy Bush Road, Rt. 232
New Hope, PA 18938
215-598-7501

Hooper, Inc.
Main Street
Intercourse, PA 17534
717-768-8231

Hooper, Inc.
East Main Street
McAlisterville, PA 17049
717-463-2191

Deerfield Ag & Turf Center, Inc.
RR 2 Box 212
Watsonstown, PA 17777
570-538-3557

Detlan Equipment, Inc.
141 East Main St
Silverdale, PA 18962
215-257-5177

Thomas L. Dunlap
Rt 220, Main St Exit
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
570-398-1391

Eckroth Bros Farm Equip.
Rd 2, Box 24A
New Ringold, PA 17960
570-943-2131

Eckroth Equipment Co.
4910 Kernsville Rd
Orefield, PA 18069
610-366-2095

Hines Equipment
RT 220, Belwood, PA
814-742-8171

Keller Brothers
R7 Box 405
Lebanon, PA 17042
717-949-6501

1950 Fruitville Pike
Lancaster, PA 17601
717-569-2500

M.S. Yearsley & Sons
West Chester, PA
610-696-2990

Pikeville Equipment Inc.
RD 2, Oysterdale Road
Oley, PA 19547
610-927-6277



Stoltzfus Farm Service
Cochranville, PA
610-593-2407

Stouffer Bros Inc.
1066 Lincoln Way West
Chambersburg, PA 17201
717-263-8424

New Jersey

Rodio Tractor Sales
North White Horse Pike
Hammonton, N.J. 08037
609-561-0141

Warren County Service Center
228 Route 94, Blairtown, N.J.
908-362-6916

Frank Rymon & Sons, Inc.
RD 3, Box 355
Washington, N.J. 07882
908-689-1464

MILK AMERICA'S HEALTH KICK