

New York Agriculture OK

GLENMONT, N.Y. — New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest general farm advocacy organization, worked hard with the State legislature to ensure the future of agriculture in New York State. The recently ended legislative session proved to be challenging for farmers, but with significant support from the Senate Majority and key Assembly support, agriculture will be able to face another season. Many key measures which passed, such as Agricultural Environmental Management, Sales Tax Reform and the restoration of various agricultural programs that will have a tremendous positive impact on agriculture in the future.

"Although we faced significantly devastating legislation this year, in the end, New York's Legislature proved to realize the importance of agriculture to New York State," stated John W. Lincoln, President of New York Farm Bureau. "We truly appreciate their support."

The 2000 Legislative session also produced one of the most supportive budgets for agriculture in recent years. After several years of low commodity prices and one weather disaster after another, agriculture needs as much support as possible, both financial and legislative.

Although agriculture can be thankful for the many successes from the past year, there are still several immediate challenges to be faced. New York Farm Bureau will continue to work on pesticide neighbor notification, citizen suit legislation, farm-worker labor issues and agricultural biotechnology. The future of all of these issues will bear direct results on the future of one of New York's largest industries — agriculture.

"We are thankful for the level of support we received this year," added Lincoln. "We look forward to working closely with our leaders in the years to come to keep agriculture viable in this State."

Dairylea Cooperative Presents Testimony At New York Senate Hearing On Ag Labor Issues

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — At a recent joint Senate hearing on New York State agricultural labor issues, Dairylea Cooperative asserted that the lack of a sufficient, competent work force has become a major concern for farmers in the Northeast.

F. Brandon Mallory, Director of Agri-Placement Services — an employment sourcing and training subsidiary of Dairylea — testified about the farm labor shortage that has developed in recent years. Citing his more than 20 years' experience in state government, dealing with the areas of agriculture and labor, Mallory said, "I am very keenly aware that it has become increasingly more difficult to find farm employees who will perform at a level consistent with today's demand for high quality milk, fruits, vegetables, and other farm commodities."

Mallory state that there were several factors contributing to

the shortage including, the low unemployment rate, a "negative" image of farm work, the seasonality of some farm work, the lack of awareness of farm labor opportunities, and a governmental labor procurement program that is too complicated and cumbersome.

"The need for a proactive approach to ensure a sufficient farm labor supply is critical," said Mallory.

To help address this problem, Mallory noted that Dairylea created Agri-Placement Services earlier this year. Although it has only been in operation for a short time, Agri-Placement Services has emerged as a much-welcomed resource for locating and training agricultural laborers, he said.

According to Mallory, Agri-Placement Services meets with farm owners, assesses their needs, and then explains an outline of services to be provided; locates farm employees who meet the specific needs of the farm; custom trains workers at the owner's farm and/or at Agri-Placement Services' training facility according to the farm owner's specific needs; helps establish a strong employer-employee relationship; transports employees to the farm, explains protocols and procedures, and helps the workers get acclimated to their new surroundings; completes all required documents for

the workers and draws up the work agreement; and provides translation services and cultural orientation to the employer and worker, as needed.

"In a very short time, Agri-Placement Services has been successful in placing 35 farm laborers from Mexico and Central America on dairy and fruit farms in New York. The initial feedback from both the farm owners and the workers has been very positive," Mallory said.

In identifying ways that the state of New York could impact the farm labor issue, Mallory said, "It would be beneficial for the state to help fund the start-up costs for organizations such as Agri-Placement Services, as well as expand job training funding to include this type of agricultural initiative. Additionally, the state should examine the possibility of assisting in the funding of a public/private venture for the development of managerial skills for farm laborers. The industry also needs financial and educational assistance from the state in dealing with cultural acclimation matters — for both the employees and employers."

In addition, Mallory said the agriculture industry would like to see a revision of the current H-2A program, as well as new legislation, making it easier for the current Mexican and Central American workers to remain and work in this country.

Franklin County Dairy Farm Open House

MERCERSBURG (Franklin Co.) — Dairy producers and agribusiness personnel are invited to Stoner's Hijos Hill, Inc., Mercersburg, on July 18, 2000 from 7:15-9 p.m. The Stoner family is sponsoring this educational event in cooperation with Franklin County Cooperative Extension.

According to Extension Agent Philip Wagner, the focus point for the evening will be the special cow barn which was constructed in 1998. The barn, which is over 300 feet long, is a three row freestall design with drive-by

feeding. The barn has 110 freestalls for dry cows.

Cows move from the freestalls to a pre-fresh bedded area three weeks before expected calving. The next stage is a maternity area with pens and a bedded pack for the post-fresh group. A milking parlor located at the end of the building is dedicated to fresh and treated cows. Currently, 520 cows are milked.

Tim Stoner, president of the corporation, will give his comments at approximately 8 p.m.

Joining us for the evening will be Dr. Arlen Mills, DVM. Dr. Mills came to Penn State Extension on June 1 as Regional Dairy Herd Health Agent for the Capital Region. He is based at the Lebanon County Extension Office.

To reach the farm, take exit 3 off I-81 at Greencastle, Pa. Proceed west on Route 16 for seven miles to Oellig Road. Turn right onto Oellig Road and travel 1.5 miles to the farm. If you have questions, call the Franklin County extension office at 717-263-9226.

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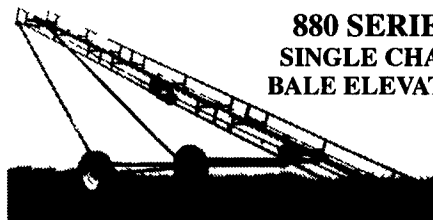
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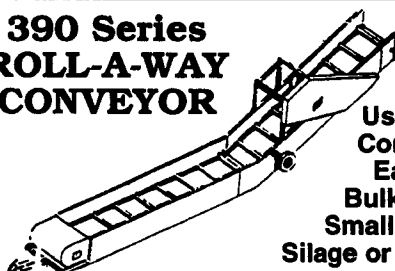


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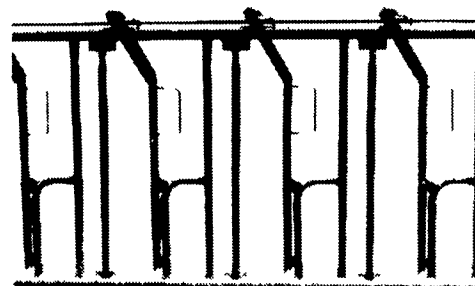
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