

Industry Officials Want Producers To Vote On Pork Checkoff

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basic element of the checkoff. There's no reason, Kephart said, for producers not to get out and vote. "They need to get out and vote, period," he said. Some believe the checkoff program is essential to continue pork promotional and educational programs. Others see it as an unnecessary expense, noting that large processors and producers already pay for extensive educational and promotional programs. But many do not question the effectiveness of the checkoff. "Without the pork checkoff, there would be no coordinated promotion programs," wrote Barbara A. Wiand, president of the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council (PPPC), in a letter from the president published in the PPPC newsletter, Pigs Pen. She noted the strengthening of pork industry's position in the world marketplace through the efforts of the checkoff. Also, without the checkoff, "there would be no coordinated research programs," Wiand wrote. "Checkoff dollars are also invested in research projects that find solutions for producer problems."

Without the checkoff, Wiand wrote, "there would be no coordinated consumer education programs." The checkoff dollars provide consumer education. "Without this component, consumers would not know that pork is 31 percent lower in fat than it was 20 years ago." Producers control 100 percent of the checkoff funds. Approximately 500 producers, nationwide, serve on boards. Wiand wrote, "We as producers have the most to lose if the checkoff ends." She urged pork producers to take the time to vote Sept. 19-21. Those eligible include producers who have sold at least one pig between Aug. 18, 1999 and Aug. 17, 2000, and individuals or entities who have imported hogs, pork, or pork products during the same period. There is no age restriction. Voters must be old enough to complete the ballot. (4-H and FFA members and other youth who have sold hogs in their own name are eligible.) Corporations, groups, and families selling hogs under one name are entitled to one vote. Producers involved in contract production and who do not per-

Cow Cam: A New Adventure

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urban neighbors understand farmers and their fantastic efforts to feed the world with modern farming practices, an Internet site has been developed called *Lancaster Farming Cow Cam*. Farmers will also get a kick out of this. In cooperation with Kreider Dairy Farms at Manheim, a sonally own or sell hogs in their name are not eligible to vote. No documentation is required to vote. Voters will register on site by completing a form to include name, address, telephone number, and a statement that the voter, or the entity he or she represents, was a producer during the representative period (Aug. 18, 1999-Aug. 17, 2000). An absentee voting package may be requested by telephone, fax, or in person from the county FSA office. The checkoff rate for the sale of hogs, feeder pigs, and breeding stock is assessed at the rate of .45 percent of the value of sale (45 cents per \$100). For more information about the referendum, contact Ken Kephart, Penn State swine specialist, at (814) 863-3671 or Internet at kbk2@psu.edu or Bob Mikesell, (814) 865-2987, or the Internet at rem9@psu.edu.

camera has been placed in their 2-acre comfort barn that takes a picture every several minutes to show the world how cows eat. In addition, future plans call for onsite coverage of field days and other special events that will support our regular extensive coverage of news for farmers. "Here we have the opportunity to bridge the gap between farm and city without the smells and muck that may be offensive to those who are not accustomed to the farm," said Everett Newswanger, *Lancaster Farming's* editor. "And we have the vehicle to let farmers take a look at themselves from a new vantage-point." In addition, editor Newswanger has created a page taken from information supplied by the Pennsylvania Dairy Stakeholders that expounds on the economic importance of the dairy farmer in rural communities. Along with "Your Stake in the Nation's White Gold," which is milk, a clickable page from the *Lancaster Farming Cow Cam* encourages community leaders to make sure their regulatory decisions do not put agriculture out of business with the resulting loss of purchasing activity and tax revenues these dairy farms provide. At Kreider Farms they already put a lot of effort into this much-needed farm-city relationship with on-farm tours and community service projects such as a kids play yard at their farm dairy store. This joint effort helps to reach the community of both farm and non-farm citizens.

Nestled in the rich farmland of Lancaster County, the Kreider family farming operation has cultivated a network of business enterprises that exemplify the efficient production, which makes the modern American farm the envy of the world. The Kreider ethic of hard work, quality production, a willingness to take risks, and a fervent faith in God have provided a solid foundation that has built a small farm from a dozen dairy cows and 200 chickens in 1935 to its present diverse farming operation. Kreider farm-fresh products are sold retail and wholesale throughout the northeastern United States. They have four restaurants and a farm dairy store in the general local community. *Lancaster Farming* is one of the nation's leading agricultural newspapers with nearly 50,000 copies sent out each week in the major circulation area of Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Virginia, West Virginia, and Ohio. First published in November 1955, *Lancaster Farming* serves as a clearinghouse for news the farmer needs. With an average of 200 pages per issue, nearly 100 market reports are given along with on-farm interviews, a home and family section, an extensive farm calendar, and news of our farm youth. For those with access to the Internet who want to follow this new adventure and other *Lancaster Farming* online services go to: www.lancasterfarming.com and click on *Cow Cam*.

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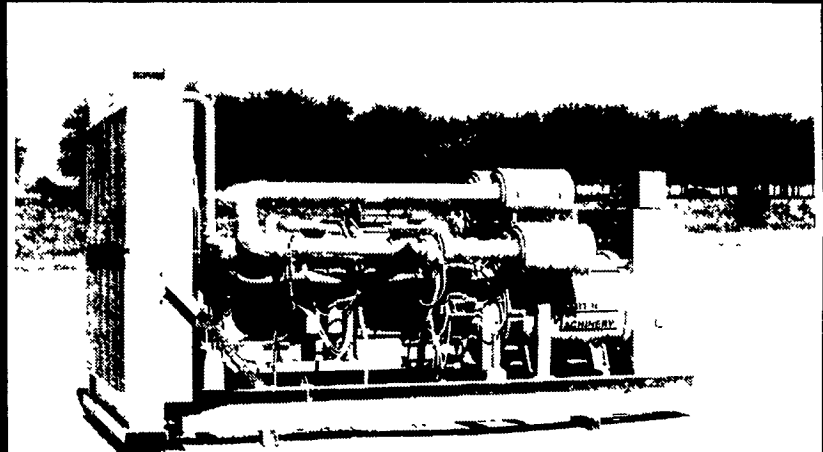
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