

Corn Growers Oppose Proposed Changes In Missouri River

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) has re-emphasized its opposition to proposed changes in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Missouri River Master Manual that would harm agriculture because of reduced navigation and the potential for spring rises.

The Corps is considering changes to its operation of dams on the lower portion of the river to raise the water level in the spring and lower it during the summer. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and environmental activists contend this will protect birds and fish that have been listed as endangered or threatened.

"NCGA recognizes the recreation and environmental value of the river and will work with others to maintain recreational and environmental benefits," stressed Paul Bertels, Director of Production and Marketing for the St. Louis-based NCGA that represents 30,000 dues-paying farmers nationwide.

"However, we want these decisions to be based on science, not politics. To date, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to produce the scientific evidence that justifies changing the Missouri Master Manual."

The NCGA continues to support the management of the Missouri River that places priority on economic uses of the river such as flood control, navigation, irrigation and power generation. "Keeping the Missouri River navigable provides competition to rail rates and keeps and maintains farm land value," Bertels said. "A spring rise could actually threaten another endangered species: farmers communities they support."

Dairy Farmers Take Concerns To Washington

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Monday, April 23, several members of the Progressive Agriculture Organization (Pro-Ag) were in Washington to attend a joint meeting with the agriculture aides from the majority of the Pennsylvania and New York Congressional delegation.

Vermont's two senator's offices were represented as was Congressman Bernie Sander's office. Aides from Congressional offices outside of the Northeast were also present.

The meeting was put together by Sen. Arlen Specter, Rep. Don Sherwood, and Pro-Ag. The meeting centered around discussions of proposed new dairy bills that would be based on the average cost of producing milk at the farm level.

One proposed dairy bill discussed was the proposed dairy bill introduced last year by former Rep. Ron Klink from Pennsylvania. This proposed bill would price milk at the average cost of production. In addition, the bill rewards dairy farmers for keeping their production in line with the real market needs.

Another key proposed bill was drafted by Gerald Carlin, a Pro-Ag member from Meshoppen. Carlin's proposed bill is similar to the bill proposed by Klink except the language in Carlin's proposed bill would not allow imports of dairy products to damage prices received by dairy farmers.

Arden Tewksbury, manager of Pro-Ag, said "There are various proposed dairy bills circulating around Washington, but only the bills proposed by Klink and Carlin proposes a new pricing formula that would give the dairy farmers an adequate price." Pro-Ag was involved in helping draft both bills.

Tewksbury said the two bills will not only give our dairy farmers a fair price for their milk, the bills are also geared towards stabilizing prices to dairy farmers and consumers Tewksbury said the majority of consumers are mystified over the present pricing method of milk and are encouraging immediate action to be taken by Congress.

Recently, Pro-Ag cooperated with the Scranton Catholic Diocese and several Protestant churches to deliver 25,000 consumer signatures to Sen. Arlen Specter, Sen. Rick Santorum, and Rep. Don Sherwood. These consumers are strongly encouraging immediate action to be taken by Congress.

Bishop James Timlin of the Scranton Diocese has taken a personal interest in the dairy farmers' plight. Bill Reed, a Methodist minister from Tunkhannock, has been very interested in the dairy farmers pricing inequities. Reed was a two-term county commissioner from Wyoming County and he is a former superintendent of the Wilkes-Barre district. Reed was recently quoted by the Scranton Tribune saying "the milk pricing problem is a justice issue." Reed said the government is systematically robbing the dairy farmers by setting prices less than their costs.

In addition to the 25,000 signatures sent to members of Congress, Tewksbury has talked with more than 120,000 consumers in the last two years. All of these consumers strongly support the dairy farmers.

Ken Dibbell, a dairy farmer member of Pro-Ag from New York, said "the beauty of the bills proposed by Klink and Carlin is the fact that the bills don't use taxpayers' money to compensate dairy farmers." Pro-Ag strongly opposes proposed dairy

bills that call for any compensation using taxpayers' money. Tewksbury said there is plenty of room in the market place for dairy farmers to be adequately compensated — we simply need a new pricing formula to obtain that fair price.

Joining Tewksbury and Dibbell in Washington was Gerald Carlin, Dave Lipe, Kurk Rhone, and Cy Cochran from Pennsylvania and Fred Matthews from New York.

Pro-Ag may be reached at (570) 833-5776.

2001 National Junior Angus Show Set For July 9-14 In Denver

DENVER, Colo. — Junior Angus members from all corners of the United States should be making plans for the 2001 National Junior Angus Show.

The annual event, which has become the biggest week of Angus activities during the year, will take place July 9-14 in Denver, Colo. The western state Angus associations have been planning and organizing the event, "Under the Western Sky" for more than two years.

Young Angus enthusiasts from more than 30 states are expected to enter cattle in the show that has grown into the largest single-breed beef cattle show in the world. In addition to the show, educational contests and leadership opportunities will be held for all members of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA).

Judges for the cattle show include Jack Ward, Lagrange, Ind., who will evaluate the owned females; Eldon Krebs, Gordon, Neb., who will judge the bred-and-owned females and bulls and cow-calf pairs; and Randy Perry, Clovis, Calif., who will select champions in the steer show.

A public speaking contest, including both extemporaneous and prepared divisions and team sales competition, along with poster, photography and graphic design contests will be held. The American Angus Auxiliary will once again sponsor the Certified Angus Beef (cook-off). As well, six members will be elected direc-

tors of the NJAA board, at the annual meeting of the NJAA, which is held during the event.

More than 50 contestants will vie for the coveted title of "Top Showman" during the finals of the 35th National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest held during the week. Showmanship judges include Tim Fitzgerald, Alderson, W.Va.; Andra Campbell, Klamath Falls, Ore.; and Brian Barragree, Absarokee, Mont.

In addition to the week of activities, the Angus Foundation is conducting its first ever golf tournament, July 10. The morning-long event will begin at 6:30 a.m., at the Thorncreek Golf Club.

Exhibitors and contestants must be a junior member of the American Angus Association, and must be nine years old, but not yet 21, by Jan. 1 to compete in the activities. Applications for transfer of the animal to junior members must be postmarked by May 15. Applications for registration of bred-and-owned animals and all entries must be postmarked by June 1.

For entries or more information about the 2001 National Junior Angus Show, contact the junior activities department at the American Angus Association, 3201 Frederick Ave., St. Joseph, MO 64506-2997, access the Internet at <http://www.angus.org/njaa> or www.angus.org/njaa or call (816) 383-5100.

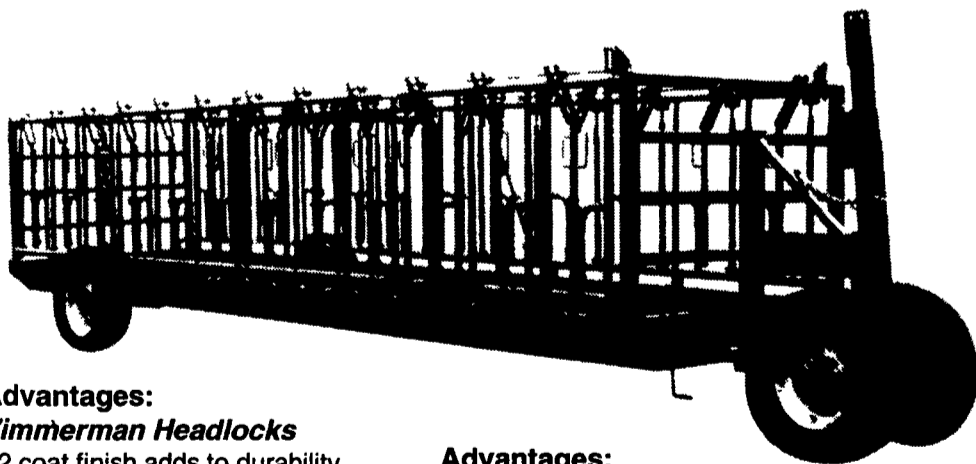
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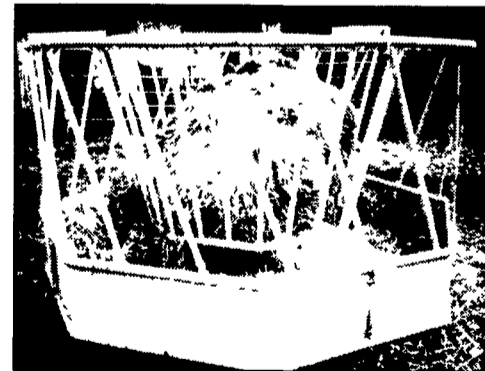
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