

Economist: Major Changes

(continued from Page A1)

price supports in effect after they were due to expire.

Price support funds are not being paid to dairy farmers at this time because of relatively high milk prices.

According to an article recently published by the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), the Combest-Stenholm proposal would extend the current milk price support target of \$9.90 per hundredweight.

Federal milk marketing orders, as well as any premiums mandated by state agencies such as the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board, fall under separate legislation and will not be effected by any price support legislation (or lack of it) that goes into the Farm Bill.

National budget limitations are another obstacle to agriculture policy reform.

Dr. Bob Young, a policy specialist from the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute, warned that falling U.S. budget surpluses could put a crunch on Farm Bill programs, according to a recent AFBF report.

"The budget issue and how much we are going to spend — I think that's going to put us in a real quandary," Young told a group of state Farm Bureau presidents.

The Farm Bill debate will likely include issues such as commodity loan rates, fixed payment rates, and countercyclical payments, he said.

As opposed to fixed payments, countercyclical support would provide relief to farmers only during periods when economic cycles bring about the lowest commodity prices.

The debate on countercyclical support will focus on what type of trigger is used to initiate payments, a decision that Young said is critical to shaping the new policy.

According to the AFBF report, Young made a distinction between assistance for farmers and commodity supports. He urged farm leaders not to focus on how much money is allocated for each commodity, but ensure that producers get the assistance they need.

"The bottom line is what money can we put in producers pockets at the end of the day," Young said.

The AFBF reported that if the proposed plan were enacted, "it would continue much of current law but provide producers with additional income support."

Measures in the draft plan not provided in the 1996 bill include an option for producers to update their base program acres and a proposed 34-cent-per-bushel payment rate for soybeans, the AFBF noted.

Other groups making recommendations for the new bill include the National Farmers Union, American Soybean Association, the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives.

"With a few exceptions, their proposal is much like the current policy that does not serve our nation's family farmers," said Leland Swenson, National Farmers Union (NFU) president. "In the wake of the failure of Freedom to Farm, we need a real change. We must take a simple and understandable approach that is about what farmers are planting today and what their yields are today," he said.

NFU recommendations for the new bill include an improved marketing loan program, a better price support system for

milk producers, fair trade initiatives, and a broader range of conservation programs.

Tony Anderson, president of the American Soybean Association (ASA), told the Senate Agriculture Committee that the previous Farm Bill has left an "unfinished agenda."

"Unless key issues are resolved, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to move farm policy beyond the role of a safety net for producers facing disadvantageous conditions, both at home and abroad," Anderson said.

ASA stated that the bill proposal is not equitable to producers of oilseed crops including soybeans, sunflowers, and canola, because loan and payment provisions "do not reflect the value or historical price relations of oilseeds to 'program' crops (such as corn)."

While commending the proposal for several measures including a continued marketing assistance loan program for oilseed producers, ASA also asked that the new bill include measures that enhance U.S. agricultural trade competitiveness, increase funding for humanitarian assistance in developing countries, increase funding for agricultural research, ease regulations that increase production costs, provide incentive payments for conservation practices, and continue adequate price and income supports.

Among the groups asking for greater conservation incentives, the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) proposed that USDA conservation and financial assistance programs be doubled.

"Congress should authorize a minimum of \$3 billion annually for a stewardship-based farm and ranch program that rewards producers for utilizing their land labor, and capital to enhance the environment," the SWCS recommended.

The National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC) has also been lobbying for new farm policy.

"The farmer's share of the consumer food dollar has declined to just 20 cents — its lowest level ever," said David Graves, NCFC president and CEO. "Increasing the farmer's share by just one cent to 21 cents would generate an additional \$6 billion in total income."

At the heart of NCFC's proposal is that federal legislation encourage and support farmer-owned businesses. Key recommendations are improving access to capital, clarifying tax laws, revitalizing USDA support, and passing a resolution to support farmer cooperatives.

"To be successful, farmers and their cooperative businesses must be strategically positioned to be able to compete in what clearly is a rapidly changing marketplace," Graves said.

USDA Secretary Ann M. Veneman commended congressmen Combest and Stenholm for their work thus far on the proposal.

"This is an important beginning and a serious response to the needs of our nation, its farmers, ranchers, and citizens," she said.

"(USDA) is currently developing principles related to future food and agriculture policy that meet the objectives outlined by the President, which include ensuring a strong income safety net, pursuing a more market-oriented U.S. farm policy, and opening up new trade opportunities abroad.

"We expect to release these

Kimberton Selects Dairy Show Champions

ANDY ANDREWS

Editor

KIMBERTON (Chester Co.) — Tom Arrowsmith, Peach Bottom, who manages a herd of 50 registered Jerseys, selected champions of the Jersey show Thursday evening here at the Kimberton Fair.

Arrowsmith selected the senior 2-year-old, WRF Fraiser Madeline, exhibited by Pat Jenkins, Toughkenamon, as grand champion of the 4-H Show. Reserve was the 4-year-old exhibited by Erica Lloyd, Pottstown, Top-O-Hill Juno Patty Cake.

Champion of the open show was exhibited by Beth Jenkins, an aged cow, CLV Montana Windstar. Reserve went to the 2-year-old exhibited by Pat Jenkins, junior show winner.

Ayrshire champions were selected earlier in the week. At the 4-H show, grand champion Jill Vail, Myerstown, won grand champion. Reserve went to Meredith Baily, West Chester.

In the open Ayrshire show, grand champion went to Jill Vail. Reserve went to Meredith Baily.

Guernseys and Holsteins were shown Friday evening, but the results weren't available as of presstime.

Following is a list of show placings.

KIMBERTON FAIR DAIRY SHOW RESULTS

OPEN SHOW AYRSHIRE

Junior Heifer: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Kelly Kulp. 3. Kaitlyn Kulp.
Intermediate Heifer: 1. Abby Hedrick. 2. Jill Vail. 3. Amber-Knoll Farm.
Senior Heifer Calf: 1. Abby Hedrick.
Summer Yearling Heifer: 1. Jill Vail. 2.



Champions of the Jersey Show Thursday evening at Kimberton Fair. From left, Erica Lloyd, reserve senior and reserve youth champion; Pat Jenkins, 4-H grand champion and open show reserve champion; and Beth Jenkins, open show grand champion. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor

Amber-Knoll Farm.
Junior Heifer Heifer: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Rebecca Nolan. 3. Amber-Knoll Farm.
Intermediate Yearling Heifer: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Aaron Heiser. 3. Abby Hedrick.
Junior Champion Female: Abby Hedrick.
Reserve: Jill Vail.
Get of Sire: 1. Amber-Knoll Farm.
Dry Cow (3 Years): 1. Amber-Knoll Farm. 2. Rebecca Nolan.
Junior 2-Year-Old: 1. Rebecca Nolan.
Senior 2-Year-Old: 1. Meredith Baily. 2. Amber-Knoll Farm. 3. Abby Hedrick.
3-Year-Old: 1. Jill Vail. 2. Amber-Knoll Farm. 3. Jill Vail.
4-Year-Old: 1. Jill Vail.
5 Years and Over: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Jill Vail.
Cow in Milk: 1. Jill Vail. 2. Meredith Baily. 3. Amber-Knoll Farm.
Best 3 Females: 1. Jill Vail. 2. Rebecca Nolan. 3. Amber-Knoll Farm.
Dairy Herd: 1. Jill Vail. 2. Amber-Knoll Farm. 3. Rebecca Nolan.
Produce of Dam: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Amber-Knoll Farm.
Dam and Daughter: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Jill Vail.

Senior Champion Female: Jill Vail. Reserve: Meredith Baily.

GRAND CHAMPION FEMALE

Jill Vail
RESERVE
Meredith Baily

YOUTH SHOW AYRSHIRE

Junior Heifer: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Kaitlyn Kulp. 3. Maggie Hillegass.
Interm Heifer: 1. Abby Hedrick. 2. Jill Vail.
Senior Heifer: 1. Abby Hedrick.
Summer Yearling Heifer: 1. Jill Vail.
Junior Yearling Heifer: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Rebecca Nolan.
Interim Yearling Heifer: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Aaron Heiser. 3. Abby Hedrick.
Junior Champion Female: Abby Hedrick.
Reserve: Jill Vail.
Dry Cow 3 Years and Over: 1. Rebecca Nolan.
Junior 2-Year-Old: 1. Rebecca Nolan.
Senior 2-Year-Old: 1. Meredith Baily. 2. Abby Hedrick.
3-Year-Old: 1. Jill Vail. 2. Jill Vail.
4-Year-Old: 1. Jill Vail.
5 Years and Over: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Jill Vail.
Dam and Daughter: 1. Rebecca Nolan. 2. Jill Vail.
Senior Champion: Jill Vail. Reserve: Meredith Baily.

GRAND CHAMPION

Jill Vail
RESERVE
Meredith Baily

AYRSHIRE SHOWMANSHIP AND FITTING

15 Years and Over: 1. Abby Hedrick. 2. Meredith Baily. 3. Rebecca Nolan.
12-14 Year Olds: 1. Aaron Heiser.
8-11 Year Olds: 1. Kaitlyn Kulp. 2. Maggie Hillegass.
SHOWMANSHIP
15 Years and Over: 1. Meredith Baily. 2. Abby Hedrick. 3. Rebecca Nolan.
12-14 Year Olds: 1. Aaron Heiser.
8-11 Year Olds: 1. Kaitlyn Kulp. 2. Maggie Hillegass.

JERSEY OPEN SHOW

Junior Heifer: 1. Erica Lloyd. 2. Erica Lloyd. 3. Julie Sollenberger.
Intermediate Heifer: 1. Janet and Elizabeth Jenkins. 2. Jessica Huff. 3. Rebecca Baily.
Senior Heifer: 1. Melissa Wertz.
Summer Yearling Heifer: 1. Jenkins Huff. 2. Bryan and Pat Huff. 3. Melissa Wertz.

(Turn to Page A37)



Champions of the Ayrshire Show earlier in the week. From left, Kellie Phillips, showing for Jill Vail, grand champion Ayrshire, and Meredith Baily, reserve grand champion.

Penn State Labs

(Continued from Page A31)

jejuni, and toxoplasma gondii (parasites) from food products.

Industry will not be allowed to use irradiation to destroy toxins or virus or to cover up badly contaminated food.

"You could probably eat a raw hamburger again," Catherine Cutter said of the time when all meat would be irradiated.

Although the cost to the consumer is higher, market trials show that 30 percent of consumers are willing to pay a premium price to assure they have a safe product, and consumers readily purchased food that FDA has approved for irradiation: spices, herbs, dehy-

principles in the near future and look forward to working together with Chairman Combest and the committee, as well as the Senate Agriculture Committee, as we address these important issues," Veneman said.

drated vegetables and seasoning mixtures, wheat flour, strawberries, papayas, potatoes, mangos, poultry, and fresh and frozen beef, pork, lamb, and veal.

Irradiation in high doses changes the color of the food being irradiated. Scientists must determine how low of dosage can be used and still kill the germs, save money, and preserve quality.

The research labs are working with high pressure combined with carbon dioxide to sanitize equipment.

Microbes in alfalfa sprouts is considered the number two food contamination outbreak in the U.S. It's difficult to kill microbes in alfalfa sprouts because the germs can hide in the crevices. If heated to kill the microbes, the seeds often die instead of sprout. Pressurizing the sprouts can break down the tension and kill the germs hiding in the crevices.

Although irradiation is an ef-

fective method for many items, scientists are searching for several methods since some consumers are skeptical of the process.

Dana McElroy explained how extension agents have been trained to teach food services and processors how to prepare and serve safe food. The university offers a food safety certification program.

The long process of researching new methods, proving them safe, and gaining FDA approval is expensive.

But it isn't only contamination that worries scientists, it's also plant diseases such as plum pox that threatens the orchard industry. To be effective in solving problems, researchers need to understand the problem. That is the struggle with the plum pox virus. Scientists do not understand exactly how the virus thrives. Poor understanding limits the ability to stop it.