



❖ FARM FORUM ❖

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competitive market situation would reward dairy producers and consumers as well.

America's dairy farmers and consumers currently appear not to be gaining any visible benefit in the marketplace. The lack of market competition that exists in the dairy industry allows the few largest companies to dominate the market not through efficiency, but through monopoly. A competitive market would benefit both consumers and dairy producers.

National Farmers Union is urging Congress to hold hearings to determine whether lack of market competition within the dairy industry is resulting in price gouging that is harming both consumers and producers. In years past, consumers benefited when cereal manufacturers responded to congressional ques-

tions by announcing they would lower cereal prices.

Similar action is now needed in the dairy industry to stop the unjust milking of American consumers and those who produce their food.

Dave Frederickson
President
National Farmers Union

Editor:

I'm a subscriber and a farmer, and really don't understand what you folks must be thinking when you run an editorial like "Who Calls the Shots" in the Dec. 14 issue.

Our township supervisors, being composed entirely of farmers and rural neighbors, passed a resolution against factory corporate farming. An absentee investor of a local factory hog farm threatened to sue the township if the resolution didn't exclude him. That hog farm ruins the quality

of life for farm neighbors for miles around. None are "suburbanites, activists, or environmentalists," just ordinary longtime rural people who can't stand the smell of large, absentee-owned factory hog farms!

To me, it's a triumph for democracy that the Pennsylvania House has refused to pass Senate Bill 1413, an amendment to the so-called "Right to Farm" Bill.

Now, I understand and sympathize with farmers who are just trying to make a living. And I support those farmers whose livelihood is threatened when suburbanites move into farm areas and complain.

But my concern is more about

how large corporations tell the state, the public, and the lawmakers (whose pockets they line with cash) what laws to pass or reject. Plus, most of us have known for years that the Farm Bureau has never represented the interests of small family farms (take a look at "Amber Waves of Gain" published online by Defenders of Wildlife, www.Defenders.org, under "publications" for a history of how the Farm Bureau has actively worked to put

family farms out of business!).

If Lancaster Farming wants the support of family farmers, it needs to listen to them. Its elected township supervisors, local farm organizations, and farmers themselves who are directly affected by factory and corporate farms. Township governments are the cornerstone of democracy in Pennsylvania. And whether they're trying to stop urban toxic sludge from being spread or the building of corporate hog factories, they need to maintain their power and effectiveness. We need to support them, not the interests of large-scale corporate ag which, in the end,

hurts family farms and rural America. If you want a readership and a farm population in the future, support them and their ability to decide about matters such as factory farming.

The Farm Bureau and corporate agribusiness mouthpieces like PennAg should be relegated to the backwaters of influence in our region. And your periodical should not be echoing their views.

Thank you.

Michael Tabor
Needmore

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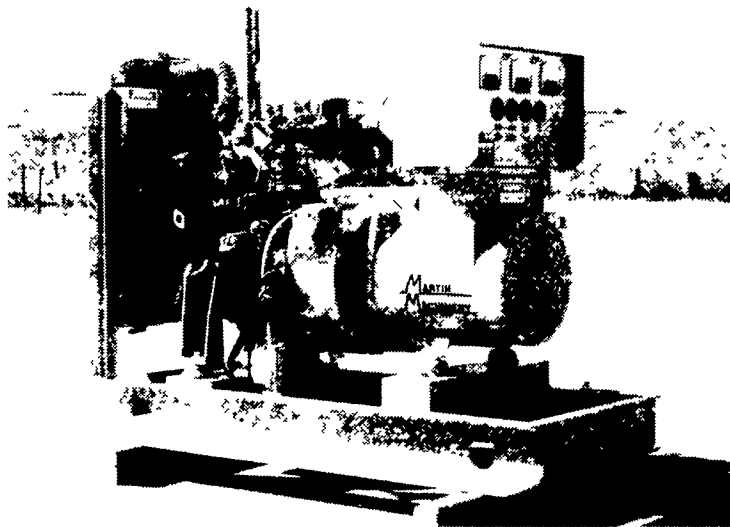
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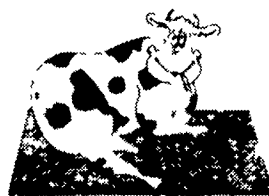


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