

Dairylea, DFA, State Grange Ask For \$1.50 Over-Order Premium

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — A dairy representative testified Monday before the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB) in favor of maintaining the over-order premium at \$1.50 per hundredweight from March through June for milk produced, processed, and sold in Pennsylvania.

Ed Gallagher, agricultural economics and milk marketing specialist, spoke on behalf of Dairylea Cooperative, Dairy Farmers of America's Northeast Council, Dairy Farmers of America's Mid-east Area Council, Dairy Marketing Services, and the Pennsylvania State Grange.

On Dec. 4, 2002, the PMMB issued a general order which reduced the \$1.65 per hundredweight over-order premium to \$1.50 for January, \$1.40 for February, \$1.30 for March, and \$1.25 for April through June 30. This order was the result of hearings conducted before the board on Nov. 6, 2002.

Gallagher testified that Class I

prices are estimated to be 32 cents lower than were testified in November. "This is an additional 3 cents a gallon decline for consumers, on top of the 20 cent per gallon decline from 2001 price levels predicted at the November hearing," he said. "Today, we ask that you take action that will result in the milk marketing board's premium being increased, at most, by 25 cents per hundredweight. Even with this increase, retail milk prices will be 47 cents per hundredweight, or 3 cents per gallon, lower than I had anticipated in November."

"Pennsylvania's milk production continues to decline," Gallagher said, "The Southeastern United States continues its trend of declining milk production as well. The over-order pricing agency in the Southeastern U.S., Dairy Cooperative Marketing Agency (DCMA) has maintained strong premiums, and during February will be increasing them... In Ohio, Class I premiums under the Mideast Milk

Marketing Agency (MEMMA), are scheduled to be increased 5 cents per hundredweight to \$1.60."

Gallagher compared plants in Ohio and Pennsylvania and showed that the blended premium to an Ohio plant would be \$1.20 and the blended premium to a Pennsylvania plant would be \$1.27. This shows a spread in favor of the Ohio plant of 7 cents relative to premiums. In December, the same calculation would have shown a spread of 23 cents in favor of the Ohio plant, according to Gallagher.

"Clearly, the actions on the part of the milk marketing board and MEMMA have mitigated premium price differences between Ohio and Pennsylvania."

Gallagher said that, in some cases, this spread is causing Pennsylvania milk to be shipped across the border to Ohio warehouses. When this milk is packaged and then distributed back into Pennsylvania there is an added cost of almost 83 cents per hundredweight, he noted.

Satellite Program To Help Beaver County Residents

BEAVER (Beaver Co.)—Ponds can provide many recreational benefits to homeowners, but they have their share of problems, according to a water resources specialist in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Some may develop leaks or fill with sediment," said Extension Associate Bryan Swistock. "The water may be muddy or choked with weeds and algae. And sometimes that big fish you hoped would be there for the kids to catch just doesn't materialize."

To address the basics of pond management, experts from Penn State, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and Mansfield University will offer a live satellite clinic from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 27. The program will be aired locally at the Penn State Beaver Campus at the Lab Classroom Building, Monaca. Local

programming will begin at 6:45 p.m.

Swistock recommends that people who own a pond develop a management strategy. "How you manage your pond depends on your goals," he said. "People who want a pond for swimming, for instance, usually want a clean, sandy bottom without many weeds. But if you want a good fishery, you'll need some plants and structures."

During the program, the experts will offer tips and advice on common pond problems and proper management. Attendees will be able to ask questions by telephone.

The clinic is free, but preregistration is required. To register for the satellite program or for more information on pond management, contact the Beaver extension office (724) 774-3003.

Potato Meeting Set For Cambria County

EBENSBURG (Cambria Co.) — The annual Cambria County winter potato meeting will take place Tuesday, Feb. 11 at the United Church of Christ in Ebensburg. The event will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m.

Speakers scheduled for the meeting include Dr. Bill Lamont of Penn State, Dan Sharrets of Snyder's Potato Chips, Kelly Ritchey of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Sara Mahoney of Penn State, and Lou Kopczyk from the Cambria County Conservation District, Dolly Little of Cambria Co. Farm Service Agency, Dave Slagle of Syngenta, Don Saber of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, and Ronald Stella-

botte of Wachovia Securities.

Topics on the agenda include field trial plots from around the state, potato defects and storage results, potato diseases, insecticides, Farm Bill issues, nutrient management, and transitioning the farm to the next generation. Pesticide applicator credits will be available.

Cost to attend is \$10 per person and includes lunch. Registrations are due by Feb. 6. Payment can be made at the extension office, or mail a check payable to Cooperative Extension, P.O. Box 390, Ebensburg, PA 15931. For more information please call the Cambria Co. Extension Office at (814) 472-7986.

Va. Farm Show Winner Announced

EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — Mike Phillips, Harrisonburg, Va., is the winner of a free five-

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