

Coalition Calls For Fair Livestock/Poultry Markets

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A broad based coalition of cattle, hog, poultry, consumer, rural, and other groups are asking Congress to take seven specific steps to address market concentration, restore livestock market competition, and impart fairness in agricultural production and marketing contracts. A letter signed by 127 organizations was recently delivered to members of Congress. The letter describes the dismal condition of today's markets and presents a blueprint for strengthening the vitally important livestock and poultry production sectors.

As a blueprint for remedying the anticompetitive forces prevalent in today's livestock and poultry markets, the groups are asking Congress to enact the following legislation that was introduced but not passed during the last congressional session:

- Ban on ownership of livestock by the biggest packers;
- Producer Protection Act to establish minimum contract standards;
- Transparency/minimum open market bill to prevent open, competitive markets from completely disappearing;
- Captive Supply Reform Act to make livestock marketing contracts open and competitive;
- Clarify the meaning of undue

preferences to clarify that preferential pricing is justified only for real differences in product value or actual and quantifiable differences in acquisition and transaction costs;

- Close the poultry loopholes in the Packers & Stockyards Act to give USDA the authority to bring administrative actions against poultry dealers; and

- Bargaining rights for contract producers to close loopholes in the Agricultural Fair Practices Act of 1967 and to require processors to bargain in good faith with producer organizations.

The coalition is encouraged by the introduction of the prohibition against packer ownership of livestock and the livestock and poultry arbitration bills in the Senate on the first day of the 108th Congress. The groups hope and expect that legislation addressing all of the issues referenced in their letter will soon be re-introduced in the new Congress, and urge their prompt and full consideration by the House and Senate agriculture committees and other committees of jurisdiction.

"Our country's farmers and ranchers are asking for nothing more than a fair market and a competitive share of the \$900 billion that consumers insert into the food and agriculture economy

Hooper Honors Customers At Banquet



HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The farm equipment company Hooper, Inc. hosted a customer appreciation banquet this week at the new Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex. About 750 customers from Hooper's Intercourse and McAllisterville stores attended. Pictured above, from left, are Charlie and Sally Hooper, owners; Tom Yohe, director and Farm Show exhibition coordinator; John Phipps, award-winning columnist with Farm Journal and Top Producer magazines, keynote speaker for the evening; Sandy Hershey of the McAllisterville store; Daryl Peifer, sales manager; and Brad Hershey, store manager at McAllisterville.

annually," the letter concluded.

Kathy Lawrence of the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, a member of the coalition, said, "The diversity of the organizations signed on to this

letter reflects how important issues related to competition and concentration are to farm and ranch families, their communities, the economy, the environment, and consumers. The unity

and solidarity among the groups in the coalition is outstanding."

For a complete copy of the coalition's letter to Congress, go to <http://www.sustainableagriculture.net/signOn.php>.

New Farmers Break Ground: New York Project Nurtures Immigrant Farmers

Adam Matthews
Cornell Small Farms Program
The U.S. has long been the land of opportunity, as well as the land of the farmer. The tradition continues today in New York with new immigrant farmers from six different countries in Central and South America. Although these new immigrants come from countries and cultures with vast agricultural experience, they face new challenges when they relocate. In the U.S., immigrant farmers must overcome the same obstacles as all other farmers while adjusting to a new country and culture.

Now in its third year, Cornell Cooperative Extension of New York City's New Farmer Development Project has been helping new farmers overcome the challenges of getting started in farming. This collaborative program between CUCE-NYC, Greenmarket-CUNY and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets was developed to encourage a new generation of skilled farmers to farm the land in downstate New York. The program works to increase each producer's ability to supply New York City and the region's farmers' market system by facilitating the entry of ethnically diverse individuals into sustainable agriculture.

The New Farmer Development Project recruits individuals interested in becoming independent farmers and/or working in farm-related jobs, with an emphasis on management, not farm labor. The program only accepts individuals who have previous farming experience and who are interested in direct (market-oriented) production, but

who lack the necessary business expertise to run a successful farm.

The project consists of a pre-season series of training sessions, called "La Nueva Siembra", conducted at cooperative extension offices in Manhattan. During the growing season, participants utilize demonstration plots in Staten Island, Far Rockaway, and Astoria, Queens. The Astoria site, known as the Phoenix Triangle, is operated in cooperation with Goodwill Industries. A new site will be added this year in Long Island City, Queens, under the sponsorship of SilverCup Studios. At each site, participants are trained in raising produce and are assisted with marketing through the NYC Greenmarkets farmers' markets.

Last year, 25 residents from New York City and surrounding counties participated in the project workshops and hands-on instruction. Fifteen fully-attended

sessions covered all aspects of production important to new farmers, including what to expect the first year, marketing strategies, transport options, selecting farmers' markets, and niche and ethnic markets. Some participants also completed a certificate "Short Course" in Hydroponics.

In its second growing season, the New Farmer Development Project conducted another series of 15 pre-season training sessions for 25 new farmers. Land was prepared in Long Island City for use by participants interested in demonstration plots. These new sites allowed participants to avoid long-distance weekly commutes to work out-of-town plots.

The success of the program is already beginning to be seen. One participant leased land in Upstate New York, and is marketing eggs and produce at farmers' markets in Tribeca and elsewhere

in New York City. Others have taken positions, working with local farmers as managers, or with farmers at the market to assist with sales.

"Everyone benefits from this program," said Norma Brenes, extension educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension of New York City. "The farmers get the information and resources they need to become successful, Greenmarket is able to expand and enrich their present farmers' market operations, and consumers have a dependable source of locally grown and 'exotic' fruits and vegetables."

The promise of developing new farmers can be seen in the work of similar programs in Massachusetts and Minnesota.

As the number of new immigrant farmers continues to grow, programs like the New Farmer

Development Project will help ensure the success of a new generation of Americans.

"I think we're beginning to see the renaissance of the American small farm," said Joanna Green, senior extension associate with Cornell University's Small Farms Program. "New immigrant farmers are going to be an increasingly important part of that renaissance."

For more information about the New Farmer Development Project, contact Norma Brenes at NYC-CCE, (212) 340-2950, or H Y P E R L I N K "mailto:nb11@cornell.edu" nb11@cornell.edu.

For information on a variety of small farm topics, visit Cornell's Small Farms Web Site at H Y P E R L I N K "http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu" www.smallfarms.cornell.edu.

COMMUNITY SUPPLIES
TMR Mixers, Conveyors, Silo unloaders, Ventilation, Barn Cleaners, Energy Free Drinkers, Gates, Shovels, Forks, Shell Oil, Fence & Dairy Supplies, Baler Twine, Batteries, Bearings, Sprockets, Pulleys, Plumbing, Glans, Paints, Shoes, Boots, We sell Bolts by the Pound or Ten. Weekly Deliveries to PA.
No matter The Color, We Have The Part!
Sunfilm, Winmore, Flavorseal, Balewrap

ITEMCO

4100 Rt 14A • Penn Yan, NY 14527
607 • 243 • 7009 877 • 531 • 8686

HEATMOR OUTDOOR WOOD FURNACES
5 Sizes - 19 Colors - Wood or Coal Grates
Forced Draft - Ash Auger Clean Out

COMPARISON WITH OTHER OUTDOOR UNITS

- Burns up to 1/2 less wood
- Emits up to 1/2 less smoke
- Corrosion Warranty up to 10 times longer

New!
Wood-Oil & Corn-Burning Options

Outback Heating Inc.
888-763-8617 800-743-5883
Jamestown, NY Staunton, VA

Stainless Steel

Randall G. Renninger
Certified Public Accountant
Specializing in agriculture and construction industries
"We help business people discover ways to cut costs, save taxes, and be more profitable"
Call about our FREE seminars

535 W. Orange Street, Lancaster, PA 17603
(717) 299-6480 ♦ Fax (717) 299-6390

MAGISTRAL™ - For Men Only!
PROSTATE CANCER KILLS A MAN EVERY 15 MINUTES!
Have You Noticed Any of These Signs - Yet?
• Increased Urinary Frequency and Urgency - Especially at Night?
• Voiding is Slow, Incomplete, and Sometimes Painful or Burning?

Then You May Already Have AN ENLARGED PROSTATE!

60% of Men Over 40 Have an Enlarged Prostate - and may not know it!
An enlarged prostate can turn into something more serious ACT NOW, rather than later!

Magistral is a fast acting, safe Herbal Tonic taken by 20,000+ Canadians to alleviate or prevent prostate problems.

Call Canada Health for Free InfoPack 800-775-1335