

Farmers Visit Washington

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — Pennsylvania's Congressional representatives were urged not to retreat from earlier commitments to agriculture when about 200 Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) members visited Washington March 19 - 20 for the farm organization's 2003 National Legislative Conference.

The meetings occurred as the U.S. House Budget Committee considered a cut of as much as

\$19.7 billion for agriculture to help balance the federal budget within seven years.

"Farmers have not participated in the economic growth and prosperity that many others enjoyed during the last decade. Poor commodity prices, reduced market opportunities, and natural disasters have further eroded the farm economy," said PFB President Guy F. Donaldson.

Energy and transportation is-

suess were other focal points for the Congressional meetings. Farm Bureau members told lawmakers that agriculture depends on reliable and affordable sources of energy.

"As world events now remind us that our energy supply can be unstable, America needs to become more self-sufficient. Agriculture can be part of the solution through production of ethanol, bio-diesel, and methane," Donaldson noted. "Passage of a comprehensive energy bill should be a Congressional priority."

Heifers Wanted For PHA Sale

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — The Pennsylvania Holstein Association (PHA) invites all Holstein dairy producers and heifer growers to consign to the PHA ID Heifer Sale, Friday, April 25, at 11 a.m. sharp, Middletown, on the premises of the association's farm.

Pennsylvania Holstein Association and Stonehurst Farm, cooperative managers of this sale series, seeks high quality Holstein heifers bred less than 7 months down to 400 pounds at sale time. These heifers should be Registered or sire identified Holsteins.

Physical conformation and health are the keys. The association welcomes high quality groups and individuals from Pennsylvania and all surrounding states. The association plans to sell 400 head. The commission is only 7 percent. If you have extra heifers, then let the PHA ID Heifer Sale be the place to market them.

Contact the PHA or Stonehurst Farm at pha@vicon.net, djlentz@pa-holsteins.com, stonhurst@super-net.com, or by calling (814) 234-0364 and (717) 329-9202, or (717) 687-7475. Consignment deadline is April 15.

Land O'Lakes Testifies In Favor Of Pooling Premium

CARLISLE (Cumberland Co.) — Pooling is the only fair way to make sure that the premium dollars collected by the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board will benefit all producers in the state, Land O'Lakes Dairy Committee Chairman Gordon Hoover told members of the Senate and House Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committees Wednesday.

Hoover, a dairy producer from Gap, joined Dennis Schad, Land O'Lakes director of Mid-Atlantic marketing and regulatory affairs, to testify on behalf of Land O'Lakes at

a hearing before the combined ag committees, conducted in State College.

During the hearing, Land O'Lakes testified in support of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board's (PMMB) regulation to pool 45 percent of the Pennsylvania over-order premium among all producers in Pennsylvania. The hearing was part of the regulatory review process for the regulation, released by the PMMB in February.

"The reason Land O'Lakes has spent the last five years urging the

PMMB to pool the Pennsylvania over-order premium is simply because the program was created to help all Pennsylvania dairy producers," Hoover said, adding that Land O'Lakes members face the same economic challenges and produce the same quality milk as producers who ship to processors with higher Class I utilization.

"There is no just reason why Land O'Lakes producers in Pennsylvania should not share equally in the benefits of the over-order premium."

According to Schad, the PMMB

put years of deliberate thought and study into how the Pennsylvania over-order premium could be distributed most appropriately to benefit all Pennsylvania producers.

"The PMMB, an agency which the General Assembly has charged to be expert in matters of the dairy industry, has sent you a reasoned regulation which considers the interests of all of the state's dairy farmers," he said. "The board drafted this regulation because they determined that the level of the over-order premium was based on conditions faced by all

Pennsylvania dairy farmers and that fairness dictated that the premium be more equitably pooled."

Pooling has been in practice for more than 65 years, with about 85 percent of the nation's milk supply priced and pooled through the Federal Order milk marketing system.

"The PMMB already allows individual processors to pool

premiums among their members, and all dealers in Pennsylvania use this payment-pooling methodology," Schad said.

Both Hoover and Schad reaffirmed Land O'Lakes commitment to keep any proceeds from the Pennsylvania over-order premium within the state and pay its members those returns. "Pooling is not about Land O'Lakes or who it represents any more than is about any other dairy industry organization supporting or opposing the regulation," Hoover said. "It's about the dairy producers who will be affected by it."

"More producers in Pennsylvania will benefit from pooling than those who won't," he explained, adding that one-third of the state's dairy producers currently receive 84 percent of the premium proceeds. "Those producers who will benefit from pooling work just as hard, are just as valuable members of the community, and deserve those premium dollars just as much as any other producer in the state. That's why we urge the passage of this pooling regulation."

Correction

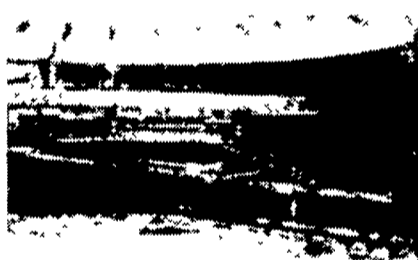
In the March 15 issue of *Lancaster Farming*, we misidentified a state FFA officer. Seated in photo is Julie Flinchbaugh, state FFA reporter. *Lancaster Farming* apologizes for the error.

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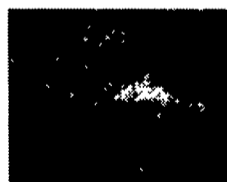


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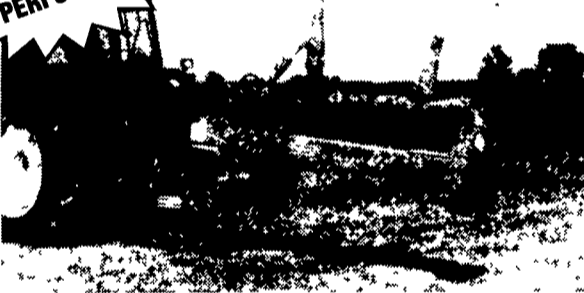


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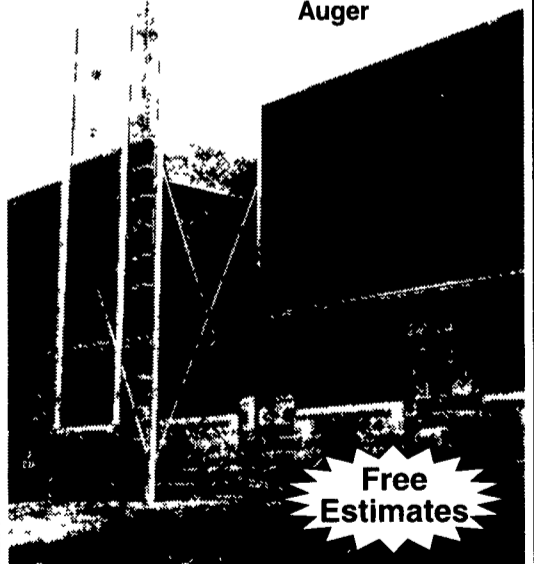
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