

Welcome New MMPA Members



The MMPA Board of Directors recently accepted the following new members:

Adrian Local

Ken D. Brugger, Joe C. Brugger, Clayton, MI

Bad Axe Local

Robert A. Schipinski, Lori A. Schipinski, Fillion, MI

Clifford-Mayville Local

Lynn Mohr, Mayville, MI

Constantine Local

William B. Bontrager, Centreville, MI

Low Valley Farms, Ervin S. Mast, Middlebury, IN

David T. Miller, LaGrange, IN

Dennis M. Yoder, LaGrange, IN

Devon Yoder, Topeka, IN

Floyd L. Yoder, Middlebury, IN

Harvey J. Yoder, Ligonier, IN

Paul J. Yoder, Ligonier, IN

Steven A. Yoder, LaGrange, IN

Evart Local

Mark R. Buning, Falmouth, MI

Hillsdale-Litchfield Local

James Matthew, Jonesville, MI

Muskegon Local

Robert L. Deur Jr., Grant, MI

Diane W. Fisk, Kent City, MI

Harley E. Miller, Holton, MI

Saranac Local

Sheryl Stewart, Coral, MI

Upstate Local

Marty Dillon, Williamsburg, MI

Plain Talk

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that the EPA collects from participating farmers won't cover the cost of doing the research. Instead, it will take \$6 million to do detailed scientific air quality evaluations on up to a dozen different types of farms. NMPF's Environmental Task Force is preparing a list for EPA of what type of farms to study, and in how many different locations.

More importantly, NMPF is also working to come up with the \$6 million tab. That money isn't just sitting around in someone's pocket, and it's not likely that Congress will appropriate \$6 million of the taxpayers' money to study air pollution from cows. So, we are actively trying to find the best source of funds to do the research.

If that money isn't found, then there are two possible outcomes. The first is that the EPA will de-

cide not to further pursue regulation of dairies' air emissions. That's a very unlikely scenario. The other, much more likely outcome, is that the EPA will evaluate dairy farms using older data, and/or information from other types of livestock operations, such as hog farms. Needless to say, that scenario is highly unpalatable, and it's one we want to avoid.

Some dairy farmers may wonder why their farms should be regulated by air quality laws at all, since there are so many other sources of problematic air emissions. That's a valid question, but it misses the point. State and federal regulators are being pressured by environmental groups, along with citizens who don't like large farms, to go after dairies and other livestock operations. The fact of the matter is, we're not going to be able to escape such attention in the future, because the wind is no longer at our back.

Editors note: At press time, more than 2,000 animal feeding operations (AFOs) had signed agreements for EPA's air compliance initiative. Sign-up ended August 12, 2005, but the agency will continue to process agreements postmarked with that date. Many of the companies that signed up have several farms that will come under the agreement. Applicants originate from more than 37 states across the United States and include representation from the pork, egg layers, meat birds and dairy industries. After EPA makes an official determination as to whether all types of animals are adequately represented, the agency will request approval from EPA's Environmental Appeals Board (EAB).