



Legislative Watch

Issues important to today's dairy farmers

Farmers Voice Concerns Over "Michigan Meatout Day"

When Michigan farmers learned that Governor Granholm had proclaimed March 20 as "Michigan Meatout Day," they took action. At MMPA's State Annual Delegate Meeting, delegates quickly adopted a policy resolution stating dissatisfaction with Granholm's action. Farmers and concerned citizens across the state flooded the Governor's office with calls stating their discontent with "Meatout Day."

"Perhaps the most unbelievable action to our members is the use of misleading and unfounded facts in her proclamation," MMPA President Ken Nobis says. "It presented a true reflection of the governor's willingness to bow to special interest groups regardless of the damage done to Michigan businesses. Agriculture is a \$71.3 billion force in Michigan's economy, a fact she appears to have overlooked in her zealous actions."

The overwhelming action by concerned residents prompted Granholm to later name March 20 as "Michigan Agriculture Day." In contradictory fashion to her "Meatout Day" proclamation, the Ag Day proclamation encouraged residents to enjoy a burger on March 20.



Michigan farmers hosted "Ag Day Meat BBQ Cookout" at the Capitol on March 20, in response to Governor Granholm declaring that day "Michigan Meatout Day." Organizer George Hubka, a part time crop farmer from Dowling, said volunteers served up approximately 500 hamburgers and hot dogs to nearly 200 attendees. All items served were donated by various supporters of agriculture. MMPA provided white and chocolate milk.



Delegates attending MMPA's annual meeting on March 16 stated their anger in Governor Granholm's proclamation of "Michigan Meatout Day." Once the delegates learned of her support for Meatout Day, they quickly adopted policy resolution stating their dissatisfaction with the Governor's decision. To add the new resolution from the floor, signatures of 50 delegates attending the meeting were required. The resolution, "C-47 Michigan Meatout Day" is stated in full on page 29.

MMPA Member Susan Troyer Appointed to National Dairy Board

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced the appointment of 12 members to the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, including MMPA member Susan Troyer, of Goshen, Ind. All appointees will serve 3-year terms beginning immediately.

"These appointees represent a cross section of the dairy industry and I am confident that dairy producers will be well served by them," said Vilsack.

The 36-member board is authorized by the Dairy Production Stabilization Act of 1983. The Secretary selected the appointees from nominations submitted by eligible producer organizations, general farm organizations, and qualified State or regional dairy products promotion, research or nutrition education programs.

The board's goal is to strengthen the position of dairy in the marketplace and to maintain and expand domestic and foreign markets and uses for dairy and dairy products. The mandatory program is funded at the rate of 15 cents per hundredweight of milk produced in the 48 contiguous States and marketed commercially.