

# Farmers form united front against bill

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)—About 300 farmers confronted U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman and a panel of other civic leaders Sunday in what may be the final public forum on a controversial Farm Bill that would reduce spending for family farms.

"We're trying to do something here that doesn't happen enough in Washington," said Carolyn Mugar, the executive director of Farm Aid.

"We're going to listen to the real experts—the family farmers and not those agri-business lobbyists who are more interested in fingering dollars than dirt," she said.

Last week, the Senate Agricultural Committee approved more than \$13.4 billion in spending cuts from farm programs over the next seven years.

Congress must now choose between two tracks for cutting spending and changing farm policy that has been in place since the Great Depression.

Farmers from California, Georgia, Minnesota, Kansas and Nebraska were among the group assembling a few hours before Farm Aid's 10th-anniversary concert was to begin in nearby Cardinal Stadium.

In addition to Glickman, the panel included U.S. Rep. Mike Ward, D-Ky., Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Ed Logsdon, poet and author Wendell Berry, along with representatives from various agricultural groups.

Farmers formed a united front at the forum in opposing the government action they felt would concede their land and livelihoods to agricultural big businesses.

Represented interests ranged from agricultural education to race in agriculture to protecting the environment.

But the basic message echoed by every agricultural interest group seemed to be the same: protect small, family-owned farms from corporate agri-business.

"Many farmers feel it's not how big you are, but how well you get the job done," said Sue Weant, a representative from Mothers and Others, a consumer education group.

"The consumers must pay farmers enough so they can keep their farms, so in years to come, children won't think that broccoli comes from the frozen-food aisle at the grocery," she

said, "or that chicken is something you find in styrofoam, wrapped in plastic."

The owners of those family farms agree.

"(Corporate interests) are destroying our industries socially, environmentally and economically," said Roger Allison, a Kansas farmer and representative of the Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment.

"This industrialization is not about efficiency or quality," he said, "it's about huge amounts of capital in control of the marketplace who are unfairly forcing country farmers out of business."

Glickman answered the farmers by saying the national trend was moving away from agriculture. America has largely become an urban society and, as a result, mostly urban interests are represented in Washington, he said.

"We are fighting to resist farm policy that will wreak havoc on rural America," Glickman said. "But all of this is going into a budget reconciliation bill, which is going to have hundreds and hundreds of other kinds of programs. That makes it extraordinarily difficult to deal with farm policy, which deserves special attention."

*"We are fighting to resist farm policy that will wreak havoc on rural America."*

**DAN GLICKMAN**

U.S. Agriculture Secretary

"I don't know what that means down the road," he said, "but it's difficult with a Congress that wants extraordinary changes in such a short period of time."

With more than 50 voices heard throughout the forum, it was one young girl who put a human face on the farmers' plight.

Katie Godfrey, 10, said she lives near a newly industrialized hog farm in Powersville, Mo. She read a poem about the stench given off by the farm and the waste material polluting a stream near her rural home.

Godfrey received a standing ovation—the loudest of the forum—when she finished reading.

"I know you maybe don't think this affects kids," Godfrey said directly to Glickman. "But it does."

# Alumnus contributes to research

By Tonya Cross  
Staff Reporter

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln might soon find it easier to remain on the leading edge of biotechnology research, thanks to the contribution of an NU alumnus.

Oak B. Smith, best known for his efforts to develop and perfect food processing methods, established an endowed fund worth more than \$275,000 prior to his death.

Theresa Klein, director of public relations and publications, said the fund would help UNL buy new equipment and research technology.

"NU educates folks to continue on the cutting edge," she said.

The fund will establish the Smith Research Facility in the George W. Beadle Center for Genetics and Biomaterial Research. The facility will be home to researchers studying and modifying proteins.

Ann Smith said her husband wanted to improve the quality of life for others, and that motivated him to become active in food technology research.

"My husband wanted to help solve the hunger problem of the world by conducting protein research," she said.

Smith earned his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from the University of Nebraska in 1940. He became internationally famous as a pioneer in the food processing field.

Irv Omtvedt, vice chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, said in a statement that the Smith Research Facility offered new opportunities for the university and its students.

It will allow researchers to address problems that dramatically affect the agricultural and food industries, Omtvedt said.

"With Smith's assistance and generosity, the future of food processing, food technology and protein research looks promising as the University of Nebraska continues to search for new knowledge," he said.

# Engineers manufacture guardrail

From Staff Reports

UNL engineers and a Texas steel company have developed a new type of guardrail designed to reduce injuries.

Beam Eating Steel Technology (BEST) was one of four guardrail terminals recently approved for use on high-speed roads, said Dean Sicking, director of the Midwest Roadside Safety Facility at the College of Engineering and Technology.

Sicking said the system was reusable, making the price competitive and one of the safest for interstates.

Upon impact, the BEST rail will capture the front of the car, dissipate the energy of the impact and bring the car to a stop. Earlier guardrails, designed to stop the car, resulted in a high number of injuries and deaths, he said.

Nebraska recently stopped using the old guardrails and is considering the BEST system for the interstates. The system already is used in Texas.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln worked with Interstate Steel Corporation of Big Springs, Texas, to develop the BEST system.

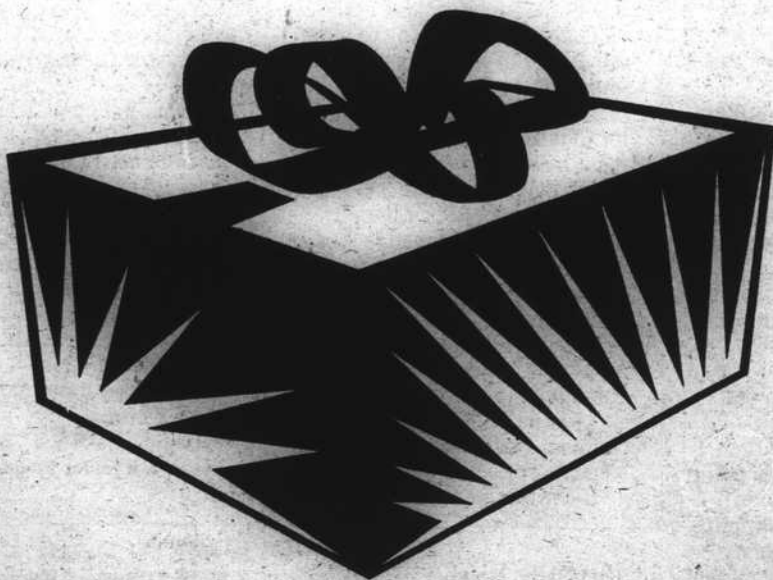
Sicking said researchers tested the system in a full-scale vehicle crash-testing facility at the Lincoln Municipal Airport.

UNL has applied for a patent on the system. Once the patent is granted, Sicking said, the university will receive royalties from the sale of the system.

"We hope that a significant amount will be used to enhance our research program," Sicking said. "I expect that will happen."

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