

COUNTY

Farmers feeling the pinch

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NORTHUMBERLAND
— Farm revenues are down, and agriculturalists are having to find other ways of making up the shortfall.

In Ottawa, the problem spurred a meeting with Federal Agriculture and Agri-food Minister Lyle Vanclief and the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board Ralph Goodale, plus representatives from groups such as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Wheat Board, and the Dairy Farmers of Canada, to name just a few.

The meeting was meant to consider speedier solutions to the "current farm income situation," though no new funds were made available.

Ministers found there was a need for swift disaster-type relief is necessary, thanks to prices slammed by the Asian economic crisis.

Paul Burnham, president of the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture said

that anyone involved with cash crops such as corn, soybeans and wheat is feeling the pinch.

"Two years ago prices for corn were over \$200 a ton," he said. "Today they are \$115 a ton."

Burnham is optimistic considering he was caught in all three of the cash crop drops. "You just have to roll with it," he said. Minister Vanclief has let it be known that he "want(s) to work with Canada's farmers during this current economic downturn."

He added, "our common goal is to look at all viable options to ensure our safety net system works."

Mr. Burnham is not impressed by Mr. Vanclief's remarks. Government funding is neither expected, nor likely.

"I haven't heard that the government is going to do anything," he said. He added that the governments have been "taking money out of these programs" rather than putting it in. He is doubtful that any other help will be

forth coming.

And the "safety net" that Mr. Vanclief is making such a deal over is actually already in place.

"There is a 'safety net' in place called NISA (net income stabilization account)," said Mr. Burnham. He explained that NISA is supported by the federal gov-

ernment, and allows farmers to set up a reserve account.

"Each year farmers are allowed to set aside a percentage of their gross revenues. The government matches those deposits and pays interest," he said. "In bad years you can withdraw from that account based on your average income." He

explained that bad years are defined as "years with below average income."

Mr. Burnham said the program provides a bit of help in tough times. He added that it is really all the cash croppers affected by the Asian drop can draw on at the moment.

"It is quite advisable for

everybody to go into it (NISA)," he suggested.

Another way of combating low prices is to store the crop until the market resurges. Mr. Burnham's own corn has been put in storage in hopes that the market prices might inflate just a little, perhaps during the winter or next spring.

CARDSHARKS

The Castleton Seniors Friendship Club met November 16 with 26 members present. Euchre results are as follows:

ladies' high Louise Sheldrick; ladies' low hand Edith Broomfield; ladies' low Lea Elliott; men's high Albert Rusk; men's low hand Peg Tozak; men's low Gordon Ellis; no travelling prize.

— Florence Lee

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The Salem Social Club met Friday, November 13. Euchre results were as follows:

ladies' high Dorothy Moon; ladies' low Dorothy Chatterson; men's high Morley Wilce; men's low Edith McKenzie; lone hands Frances Wilce; travelling prize, Marjorie Allen; 50-50-draws Joe Penny and Marie Morrison.

— Viola Stickle

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Colborne and Area Community Care's euchre results from November 12 are as follows:

ladies' high Lorna Free-land; ladies' lone Leona Robertson; ladies' low Ann Fitchett; men's high Leo Peebles; men's lone Flo Greenhough; men's low Everett

Beattie.

Euchre results from November 19 are:

ladies' high Barbara Reid; ladies' lone Marjorie Allen; ladies' low Doris Hall; men's high Tom Stickle; men's lone Joe Penny; men's low Beth May.

— Sheri Birney

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Trinity Anglican Church euchre was held in the parish hall November 19. Prize winners were as follows:

ladies' high Ivy Maskell; ladies' lone Frances McDonald; ladies' low Norma Weatherup; men's high Dean Chapman; men's lone George Maskell; men's low Peg Tozak.

Euchres are held every Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

— Ivy Maskell