



Jane Sowers (center) was recently crowned the 1972-73 Pennsylvania Poultry Queen by the 1971-72 Queen, Joy Nikerle (left) in competition in the annual Pennsylvania Poultry Queen contest in the Hershey Motor Lodge, Hershey. Miss Sowers, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ray

Sowers, is a native of Fairfield, Adams County, and is attending Shippensburg College. Barbara Gehman (right), daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Noah Gehman, East Petersburg, represented the Lancaster County Poultry Association.

McHale Backs Butz On Hay Program

Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Jim McHale, noting a cutback in the Commonwealth's hay production this year because of floods triggered by Hurricane Agnes and late summer drought, is calling for the creation of a federal Hay Assistance Program to provide low cost hay to affected farmers.

"Dairy and livestock farmers in areas devastated by the June floods will almost certainly run into hay shortages by January and will need help in buying more hay to feed their herds," said McHale.

The secretary said he is backing a proposal submitted to United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz by local farmers and hay dealers for a program to subsidize hay purchases by farmers in disaster areas.

The proposal would establish a Hay Assistance Committee, headed by a hay specialist, which will establish a price for hay in disaster areas that is based upon what a farmer can actually afford to pay for hay and still maintain his livestock. The difference between this fixed hay price and the actual cost of delivering the hay will amount subsidized by the federal government, according to the proposal. As freight rates vary, so will the federal subsidy.

McHale pointed out that production for all types of hay in Pennsylvania for 1972 is 3,977,000 tons, down 9 percent from last year. Last year's production totaled 4,351,000 tons.

The secretary also explained that the quality of hay was

generally poor this year, a factor that will further strain the hay supply.

The flooding in June rendered much acreage useless for pasturing dairy and beef herds, said McHale, and many farmers were forced to supplement feed with stored hay. This depletion of stored hay coupled with a curtailed hay crop yield will catch up with many dairy and livestock farmers by January, said McHale.

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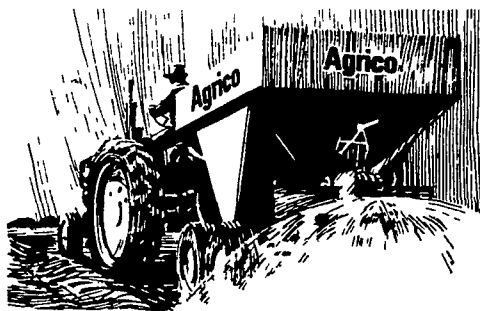
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