

# Fertilizer Problems Outlined by PennAg

Supply, price and transportation, are the important problems facing the fertilizer industry today, Samuel C. Sherk, director of services for PennAg Industries Association, said Tuesday.

Addressing the Pennsylvania Inland Fertilizer Association at their recent annual meeting in Harrisburg, Sherk said that six months ago OSHA, (Occupational Safety and Health Act), was the main topic of Association meetings, whereas today huge agricultural export deals and

Mother Nature have made supply and cost the main topic of agribusiness concern. Industry is conforming with OSHA regulations and OSHA policies have been established

"Supply is currently the biggest headache in the fertilizer industry", he commented.

Sherk said the United States Department of Agriculture has stated it is watching the problem of shortages in the fertilizer industry closely.

The service director said that fertilizer industry leaders are

also watching the situation and are worried about fertilizer ingredient shortages, such as phosphoric acid for phosphate fertilizer. The present shortage of rail cars could be compounded because of huge fertilizer exports being considered. Canada has already warned about rail car shortages in the movement of potash to the market place. These signs all point to a very critical year in 1973.

Sherk said that the outlook is similar "to the present feed ingredient problem". PennAg Industries Association is recommending that huge export contracts such as the one with the Soviet Union be renegotiated and an embargo be placed on grain exports and rail equipment used in exporting until the United States can realistically absorb the exports and slacken the strain now placed on the country's transportation system.

The PennAg representative said the effect of the rail equipment shortage has been felt mostly by small businesses because the shippers find it more economical to service the large dealers. Small shippers are having a hard time receiving rail

equipment, especially covered hopper cars. "The ICC does not seem fully aware of the economic hardship and marked dislocation caused by inequitable car distribution", Sherk remarked.

Sherk in his message also hit upon the problem of rail abandonment and its effects on agribusiness not situated on main railroad lines. A community or business that loses its rail service, loses an important economic factor. PennAg is vigorously opposed to rail abandonment before real alternatives are offered to small businesses and communities which rely on the railroads.

Sherk concluded by stating that the problems faced by Pennsylvania's agribusiness community will not only effect the businesses, but also their customers and the general public. Only by working together will the inequities of agricultural and rail equipment supplies and rail abandonment be contained.

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# Inter-State's Honan Says Crisis Looms

Phila., Pa., January 10, 1973  
"The sudden increase in the cost of feed supplies, and the amount of such increases severely threatens both the short-term and long-term future supply of milk for this area," according to Dr. James E. Honan, general manager of Inter-State Milk Producers' Cooperative.

Honan petitioned the US Department of Agriculture for an immediate emergency hearing to consider a review of the Class I price level in the Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Order No. 4.

"The major production areas in the Northeast were already hit hard by tropical storm Agnes," explained Honan. "In addition, early last summer an extremely unfavorable harvest throughout the entire hay-making season occurred. Not only were yields reduced substantially, but recent reports indicate that the quality of silage and roughage are extremely low."

Inter-State Milk Producers' Cooperative's 3000 members have been frustrated with conditions that may result in liquidation of dairy herds and non-reversible withdrawal from the dairy industry, according to Honan.

"Since there is a lag in official data," Honan told USDA officials, "time does not permit action through the regular hearing process to give assurances which are now needed. Action must be taken by those in authority to counteract these unfavorable conditions and create some stability in the future outlook for dairymen shipping milk to the metropolitan areas of Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington."

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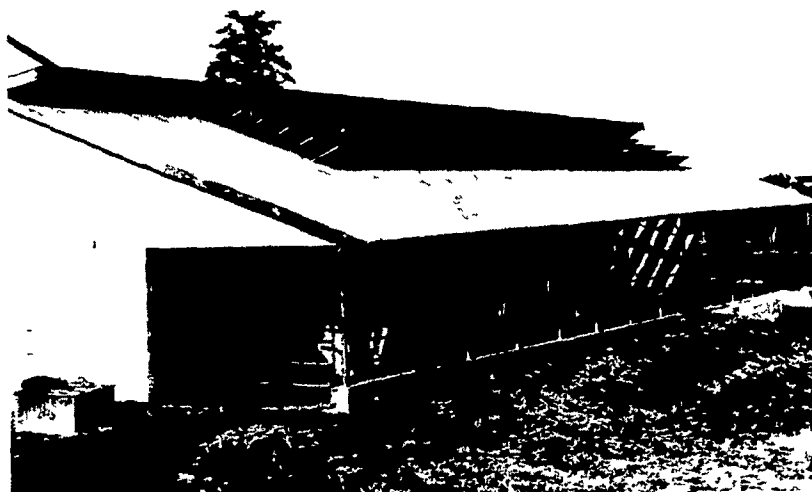
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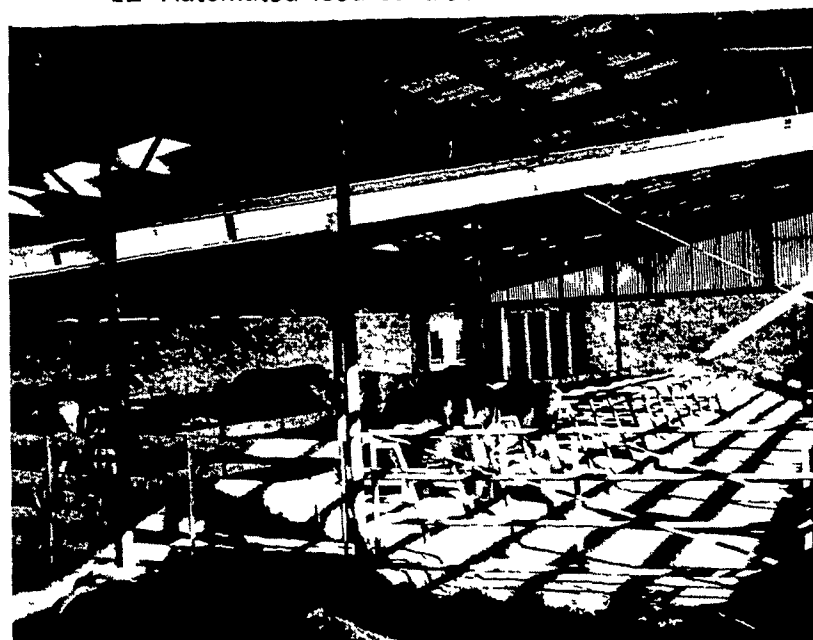


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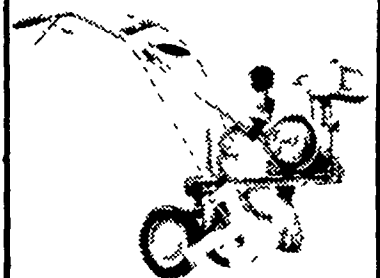
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