

Pa. Farmland

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mers held on in a marginal fashion while farming the land to supplement employment elsewhere. Often the land is rented or sold to a neighboring farmer who expands his operation in order to stay in business. Other farms are purchased by "gentlemen farmers" with sufficient capital to raise horses or beef cattle for an avocation.

Inevitably, the small farmer has had to decide whether to enlarge his operation or to get out of farming. "It isn't only the farmer and his family who are the losers when his fields and meadows become paved with asphalt — something very precious to us all — something we call rural life — becomes a casualty." So stated Robert Hall in the December 1972 issue of the Conservationist.

For those farms where none of the preceding changes occurred, land often has been left idle for several years to grow up in brush and weeds while waiting for a developer to buy it. Recently there has been a rising interest in the purchase of such farms, accompanied by soaring prices. Although real estate has

traditionally been recognized as having good investment potential, this new interest in rural properties is not always profit motivated. Probably a better explanation is the desire to "try on" some of the values perceived to be associated with rural life.

It is in this climate of economic, environmental, and sociological involvement that Pennsylvanians will vote in the May 15, 1973, primary election to decide whether to amend the Constitution of the Commonwealth to permit the enactment of legislation for establishing standards, qualifications, and special tax provisions for agricultural reserves and land actively devoted to agricultural use. If farmland were to be taxed on the basis of its agricultural use-value, this would help relieve the financial pressure from taxes for many farmers and thereby help to keep some land in active farming that might otherwise be converted. It also would prepare for the day when county-wide reassessment occurs and farmland might otherwise be reassessed according to its potential urban value. Indeed,

during the past three years in particular counties numerous instances have occurred involving county-wide reassessment where taxes for individual farms were increased by 200 - 250 per cent and some a great deal higher.

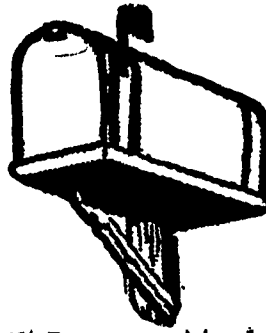
In the long-run, however, it is quite clear that a more effective solution will require land use controls in conjunction with a special taxation program. Among the measures that have been discussed are (1) public purchase of open space land and the subsequent leasing of tracts to farmers and other appropriate users, (2) making effective provisions for agriculture in comprehensive land-use plans and in zoning ordinances, and (3) public ownership or purchase by non-profit conservancy groups of scenic easements and development rights for open space land. But land use controls such as these will take time to develop and will require substantial inputs from citizens, township supervisors, county commissioners, and state legislators.

WATTS! That's What! Save Them!!

A watt, as you probably know, is the unit used to measure electric power. You've seen it used to measure power of light bulbs, for example, 100-watts. Or on your electric bill it is stated in terms of the kilowatt-hours (a kilowatt is 1,000 watts) that you've used during the month.

And if you've sometimes thought your bill was high, it's probably because you are using more electricity today than ever before. Actually electricity is one of the few things that is cheaper today than in 1930. The average rate for residential service from the large electric utilities in Pennsylvania in 1930 was 6.4 cents per

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kilowatt-hour. Today the rate has been cut by more than half.

But consumption of electricity in the home has almost doubled in the last decade. To the point, in fact, that demand for electricity is racing the multi-billion dollar plant construction program of the utilities to produce it.

To help stave off the threatened energy crisis, the Pennsylvania electric utilities are launching a campaign aimed at reducing waste of electric energy and at promoting wise use. Here are some of the ways in which utility companies advise that you can help, and in the bargain, reduce those kilowatt-hours, and, hence, your electric bill:

In the kitchen, turn off the electric range when not in use; use it only for cooking; thaw frozen roasts before cooking; use flat-bottom utensils with tight fitting lids and place on the same size unit as the pan. Begin cooking foods on high heat and complete it on medium or low settings.

Defrost your refrigerator regularly; replace worn door gaskets; turn settings down a few degrees when you go away for a weekend or longer; let hot food cool before putting in the refrigerator.

Plan your clothes washer and dryer loads for evenings and weekends when electric demand is lowest; do one full load instead of many small ones; save hot water by using the correct automatic washer settings.

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For Sale - AC flail chopper \$150. 2 row AC cultivators \$25. Call Rising Sun, Md. 301-658-6325

Barn Sale - Loads of used furniture, household and decorative items of all kinds, reasonable prices. Saturday and Sunday on Rte. 41 Cochransville, Pa.

For Sale - 1 Boston Terrier pup ready now, nice markings. Amos L. Martin, North Linden St., Terre Hill, East Earl RD1, Pa.

For Sale - John Deere Crimper and McCulloch Chain Saw. Call 215-267-5345

For Sale - Old stone wall. Some good stone, best offer. Alvin S. King, Leola RD 1, Pa. 17540

For Sale - 12R John Deere combine, excellent condition, tobacco lathe, large size tractor tires for flowers beds or child's sand box. Folding wheel chair. Phone 717-533-9215

For Sale - Registered Service Age Holstein bull Damisan EX 91 Pt. Ivanhoe Dau; Also 5 heifers up to 15 mos. old, several by Ivanhoe Star. Calvin D. Beiler, RD1, Paradise, Pa.

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