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Lancaster Farming

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Francis Kennedy, chairman of the Pennsylvania House Agriculture Committee and principal backer of HB 1056, at work in his Capitol office.

Hearings Set for Farm Tax Issue

"The people of Pennsylvania have let it be known that they want farmers to have a tax break," Francis Kennedy, chairman of the Pennsylvania House Agriculture Committee, told LANCASTER FARMING Wednesday during an interview in his office.

"We've drafted a bill, House Bill 1056, which we think will do the job," Kennedy noted. "But we're not going to cram it down anybody's throat. We're going to hold public hearings, and we're going to find out how people feel about the bill."

The first public meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 28 in Harrisburg. There'll be another meeting somewhere in the southeastern corner of the state, possibly Lancaster County, and there'll be another one in western Pennsylvania, maybe Butler County, where Kennedy owns a dairy farm.

The aims of HB 1056, shown in its entirety at the end of this article, are to preserve the state's limited supply of prime agricultural land, to prevent the premature conversion of such land to urban use, and to preserve the state's scenic beauty by keeping more open lands around urban areas.

"Farmers should be happy with this bill," Kennedy said, "because it was really designed for them. If a farmer means to farm his land, this will help him do it. If his main goal is land speculation, this bill might make him think twice about speculating."

In order to qualify for a tax

break under the provisions of HB 1056, a farmer would sign a contract with the county, agreeing to keep his land in agriculture for ten years. Only parcels of land greater than five acres in area could qualify. Kennedy pointed out that this is a strictly voluntary feature of the bill "Nobody's forced to sign that contract," he said. "If a farmer wants to keep farming, he'll want a tax break, and he'll sign. If he's speculating in land, he won't

sign. But his tax bill will be a lot bigger."

Exactly how much of a tax break a farmer might get is so tremendously variable, that Kennedy didn't even try to quote a dollar figure. The tax break depends upon the differential between a farm's speculative market value and its value as farmland. In some areas, along Lancaster's Route 30, for example, this price spread would

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Elam Bollinger . . .

Going Strong After 28 Yrs. of Dairying

Elam Bollinger has been milking Holsteins for nearly 30 years. Starting with eight grade Holsteins in 1945, he and Mrs. Bollinger have slowly built their herd up to the point where they now have more than 90 registered animals, with 45 head milking.

"When we started farming in Clay Township," Bollinger recalls, "we had no tractor and no electricity and we milked by hand. That was back in 1945. One of the first things we bought, though, was a tractor. Starting out was hard then, but it must be lots harder now."

Bollinger is serving his second year as president of the Lancaster County Holstein Association, and is a firm believer in the value of the black and white milk factories. "I think

I get a good return on my investment. It's not unusual to have a Holstein milking over 100 pounds a day."

Milking is a family affair at the Bollinger farm, with Mrs. Bollinger and 17-year-old Darryl pitching in. A pipeline milker

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June
Is Dairy
Month

Rural Life Expert To Talk Thursday

Dr. Charles P. Loomis, a noted expert on rural life, will present a public affairs lecture and seminar on "Agriculture and Social Change", Thursday, June 14, at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center. The event is being sponsored by the Farm and Home Foundation.

The speech will begin at 7:45 p.m., it is free of charge and is open to the public.

Dr. Loomis is Anderson Professor of Sociology at the



Dr. Charles P. Loomis

University of Houston, in Houston, Texas. He is a native of Colorado, and is a former professor of sociology and anthropology at Michigan State University.

Loomis has served with the USDA's Division of Farm Population and Rural Life, and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. At one time he headed the extension and training activities for the USDA's Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. This assignment included work as a senior social scientist in Costa Rica.

From 1964-1966 Dr. Loomis served as a consultant in sociology, India, with the Ford Foundation. He also served with UNESCO of the United Nations on evaluation of literary programs in Tanzania, Iran and India; and with the U.S. Public Health Service and the president's Commission on the health needs of the nation (1950).

Dr. Loomis has published widely on subjects related to agriculture and social change.

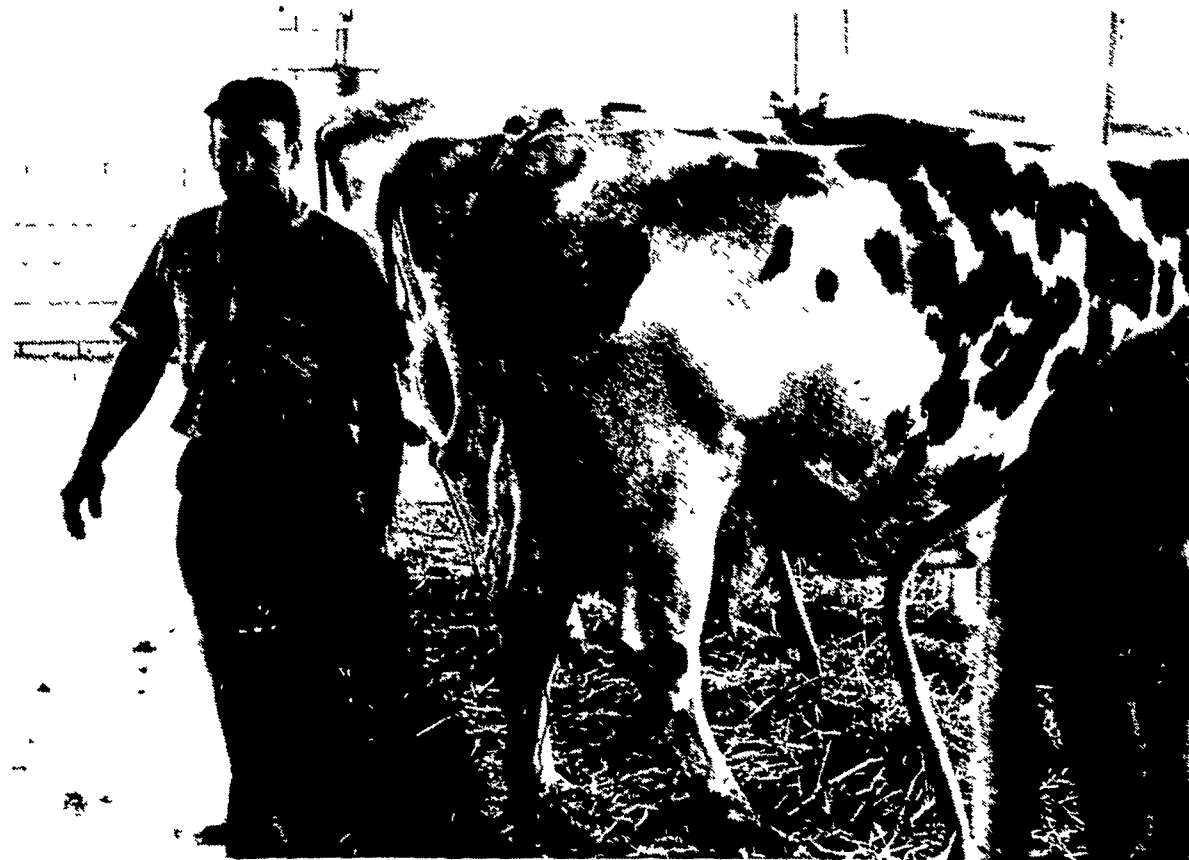
Plowing Contest Slated

The Lancaster County Conservation District board of directors announced Wednesday night at their regular meeting that a plowing contest will be held again this year for area plowmen.

The contest has been scheduled for Tuesday, July 24, to coincide with the annual conservation field day. A location for the event has not yet been chosen.

For local winners, the District has agreed to pay part of the expenses to the state contest. That contest will be held this year in Hershey, during Agricultural Progress Days, the week of August 27.

In other discussion, the board went over plans for hosting the annual convention of Northeastern U.S. conservation directors. The convention is scheduled for August 5-8, and will be held in Lancaster's Hilton Hotel.



Elam Bollinger, president of the Lancaster County Holstein Association, has

spent nearly 30 years building a herd of top-quality registered Holsteins.