

Farm Tax

(Continued From Page 8)

The General Assembly of Pennsylvania, House Bill No. 1056, referred to Committee on Agriculture and Dairy Industries, May 30, 1973.

An act prescribing the procedure under which an owner may have land devoted to agricultural use valued for tax purposes at the value it has for such uses and creating in each county a county commission for agricultural tax assessment; and providing for reassessment and certain interest payments when

such land is applied to other uses.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short Title.—This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Pennsylvania Farmland Assessment Act of 1973."

Section 2. Legislative Findings and Policy Declaration.—(a) The preservation of a maximum amount of the limited supply of prime agricultural land is necessary to the conservation of the State's economic resources, and is necessary not only to the agricultural economy of the State, but also for the assurance of adequate, healthful and nutritious food for future residents of the State and Nation.

(b) The discouragement of premature and unnecessary

conversion of prime agricultural land to urban uses is a matter of public interest and will benefit urban dwellers themselves in that it will discourage discontinuous urban development patterns which unnecessarily increase the costs of community services to community residents.

(c) In a rapidly urbanizing society agricultural lands have a finite public ecological value and open space and the preservation in agricultural production of such lands, the use of which may be limited under the provisions of this law, constitutes an important physical, social, esthetic and economic asset to existing or pending urban or metropolitan developments.

Section 3. Definitions.—As used in this act, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section unless the context obviously otherwise requires:

(1) "Agricultural commodity." Any and all plant and animal products produced, including but not limited to, forages and sod crops; grains and feed crops; dairy animals and dairy products; poultry and poultry products; livestock, including beef cattle, sheep, swine, horses, ponies, mules or goats, including the breeding and grazing of any of all such animals; bees and apary products; fur animals; trees and forest products, fruits of all kinds, including grapes, nuts and berries, vegetables, nursery, floral, ornamental and greenhouse products.

(2) "Agricultural reserve." Land shall be deemed to be in agricultural reserve when devoted to agricultural uses, even though not actively. It is so designated as reserve for its potential to produce agricultural commodities. Land maintained in such use shall preserve ecological characteristics, natural beauty and environmental balance.

(3) "Agricultural use." Use of the land for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity.

(4) "Commission." The County Commission for Agricultural Tax Assessments established by this act in each county making assessments and contracts under this act.

Assessment whose members shall include the county tax assessor, a representative of the conservation district whose livelihood must reflect an income of which seventy-five per cent be from agriculture, and a school board member appointed by the chairman of the county commissioners.

(b) It shall be the responsibility of this commission to review applications for preferential tax assessment and make written recommendations with reference to assessments thereof. The commission shall also record with an Agricultural Land Registry Office under the State Department of Agriculture a copy of the deed to land under preferential assessment. A number shall be assigned to each contracted area in accordance with the county number and a serial number for the deeded land.

Section 6. Applications for Preferential Assessment.—(a) Each owner of agricultural land desiring preferential use assessment under this act shall make application to the assessor of the county in which the land is located. Application shall be submitted in triplicate on or before July 1 of the year immediately preceding the tax year.

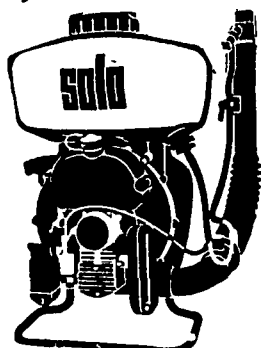
(b) Upon filing of an application, the assessor shall send a copy each to the Department of Agriculture and to the commission of such county for revision if necessary and recommendations found advisable. Revisions and-or recommendations shall be returned to the county assessor within thirty days of receipt.

(Continued On Page 33)

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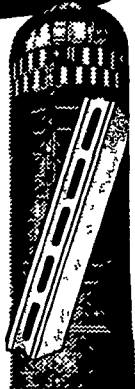
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