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At a recent regular meeting of the Manheim Young Farmers, new officers were elected for the coming year. Assuming leadership roles in the group

are, left to right, James Kettering, vice-president; Earl Landis, public relations; Russell Adamire, secretary; Joe Lefever, treasurer; and Ben Nolt, president.

Increase in Grain Acreage and Production Seen for 1974

Participants in the 1974

National Agricultural Outlook Conference heard that the nation's farms will make less money next year, but more than in any year except 1973 which is chalking up a record of over \$25 billion in realized net farm income.

C. Kyle Randall, chairman of the Outlook and Situation Board of the Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, told the Conference that realized net farm income next year is forecast at \$20 to \$23 billion. The higher figure is likely if adverse growing and harvesting conditions reduce crop output and push farm prices above 1973 levels.

Barring bad weather, farm prices of both crops and livestock are seen averaging about the same as this year and marketings may edge up, Randall said. Offsetting factors include "minimal" direct government payments in 1974—to be off sharply from 1973's \$2.6 billion—and a rise in production expenses of around five percent.

Farm real estate prices will continue their steep ascent but at a slower pace than in 1973 when land prices per acre advanced by a record 20 percent nationally. With land and farm real estate making up two-thirds of the farming sector's assets, the value of assets on Jan. 1, 1974 will total \$441 billion—up 15 percent from a year earlier.

Turning to production prospects, Randall said projections indicate sizable increases in acreage and production of grains in 1974 given adequate supplies of fuel and fertilizer. The wheat crop would reach 1.9 billion bushels, corn 6.4 billion, and total feed grains 228 million tons. Soybean acreage and output may not equal 1973 but supplies will be ample. Livestock product output will climb, with

all the increase in beef and poultry and little or no change in pork. Milk production may be off a bit.

Outlook for retail food prices calls for a moderate increase in average 1974 prices. Grocery store food prices are likely to rise again in first quarter 1974 as meat supplies shrink and prices of other items advance. Second quarter prices are expected to remain nearly constant. Widening marketing margins are apt to offset declining farm prices, and falling meat and poultry prices may offset gains for most other categories of food.

Pa. State Grange Holds Conference

Deputy state masters and department heads of the Pennsylvania State Grange discussed 1974 plans and programs at a conference held Friday and Saturday, Dec. 28 and 29.

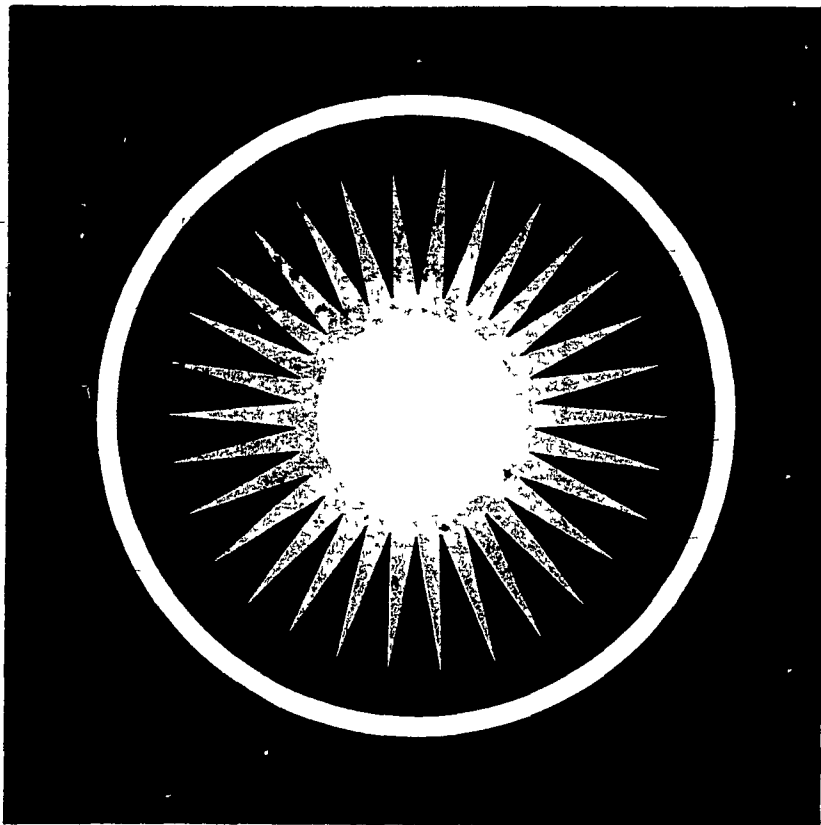
Approximately 150 persons attended the business sessions held at the Nittany Lion Inn at State College, according to A. Wayne Readinger, state master.

Ted Amick, assistant to the national Grange master, was the keynote speaker Friday. Readinger discussed legislation and Grange policy, and department heads outlined activities planned for 1974.

The conference, Readinger said, emphasized "New Horizons" for the 58,000 member Pennsylvania State Grange in its second century of service. The State Grange was organized in Reading in 1873.



Alchemists believed that mercury and sulphur could produce silver and gold.



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