

# Produce Growers, Buyers Seen Needing Cooperation

The need for closer communications between Pennsylvania produce growers and wholesale buyers was cited at a recent Produce Marketing Seminar called in Harrisburg by Secretary of Agriculture Jim McHale.

Growers and buyers said rapport was essential for maximum sales of state-grown fruits, vegetables, mushroom and nursery stock.

To better understand each other's needs and problems, plans were made for groups of growers to visit the facilities of buyers and for buyers to make visits to farms.

McHale told the group the Department planned to assist growers in developing a grading system for their produce that should lead to improved sales.

The Secretary also described plans to study the feasibility of establishing agracenters that would tie in farm and wholesale operations, thereby reducing middleman price spreads. For example, said McHale, dairy farmers in a given area could help establish a milk processing plant near their farms or livestock farmers might locate a packing plant near them.

McHale also announced that the Bureau of Markets will test a Produce Information Exchange this summer. The exchange will be a clearing house for

growers seeking buyers and buyers seeking sellers.

Glenn Guiser, president of the Philadelphia chapter of the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and head produce buyer for Acme Stores, said that year-round supplies of fresh fruits and vegetables from both domestic and foreign sources help reduce the demand for Pennsylvania-grown produce when it becomes available. Pennsylvania growers must adopt

more aggressive marketing tactics to compete, he said. He also said the trend in supermarket produce departments was toward more pre-packaged items.

At round table discussions, it was observed that: - Speciality crops - such as asparagus, bleached celery, cooled sweet corn - are in demand by supermarkets.

- A better market system and better quality control for fresh potatoes is desirable.

## Order 4 Base Milk Up 19-cents in Feb.

The February uniform price for base milk increased 19 cents from the previous month. Excess milk showed an increase of 2 cents per hundredweight according to Andrew A. Martin, Ephrata, field representative for Inter-State Milk Producers Cooperative.

In comparison to February levels one year ago base milk was up \$2.10, to \$9.70. Excess was up \$1.50, to \$7.00.

The weighted average price for the market was increased by \$2.00, above February 1973.

A total of 349.9 million pounds of producer milk was pooled in February of which 63.22 percent was sold as

Class I, showing a decrease of 1.47 percent of deliveries made in January, and a decrease of 4.2 percent under February a year ago. 7841 Order No. 4 producers provided 12.49 million pounds per day to dealers during February, averaging 1594 pounds per day per farm. Total value of producer milk was set at \$32,672,647.94 for the month.

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# Butz Plans Asian Trip

Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz will leave April 2 for three weeks of trade and agricultural discussions with Asian countries which buy one-fourth of the United States' agricultural exports.

The Secretary's trip will take him to Japan, Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong, the Philippines and the Republic of China (Taiwan).

"In the past year, Asia has become the largest and most dynamic export market for American agriculture—larger than all of Europe," Secretary Butz said.

"With U.S. farmers expanding their plantings again this year in response to domestic and world needs, it is more important than ever that we look toward long-term expansion in Far East demand, and work to serve that market and keep trade channels open," he said.

Commenting on the growth of our Asian markets, Secretary Butz pointed out that it was only four years ago that Japan became the first billion dollar customer for U. S. farm products "and for 1973-74, we are estimating the Japanese market at \$3.4 billion."

U. S. agricultural exports to Asia will exceed \$8.5 billion this fiscal year, compared with \$4.6 billion

last year, he said.

In Tokyo, the Secretary will meet with the Honorable Tadao Kuraishi, the Japanese Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, and other government and industry leaders. While there, Secretary Butz will formally open Tokyo's American Food Festival scheduled April 15-19 and sponsored by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and state departments of

agriculture in cooperation with the Japanese Export Trade Council.

In Seoul, the Secretary will engage in official talks requested by Korea on production and trade questions affecting supply.

While in Bangkok, Thailand, the Secretary will confer with agricultural attaches stationed at American embassies in India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh.



Gladstone, a great reformer and Prime Minister of England, used as the theme of his opening speech in Parliament, the defence of slavery!

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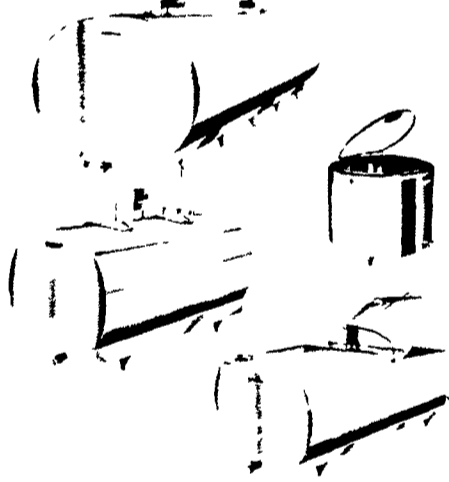
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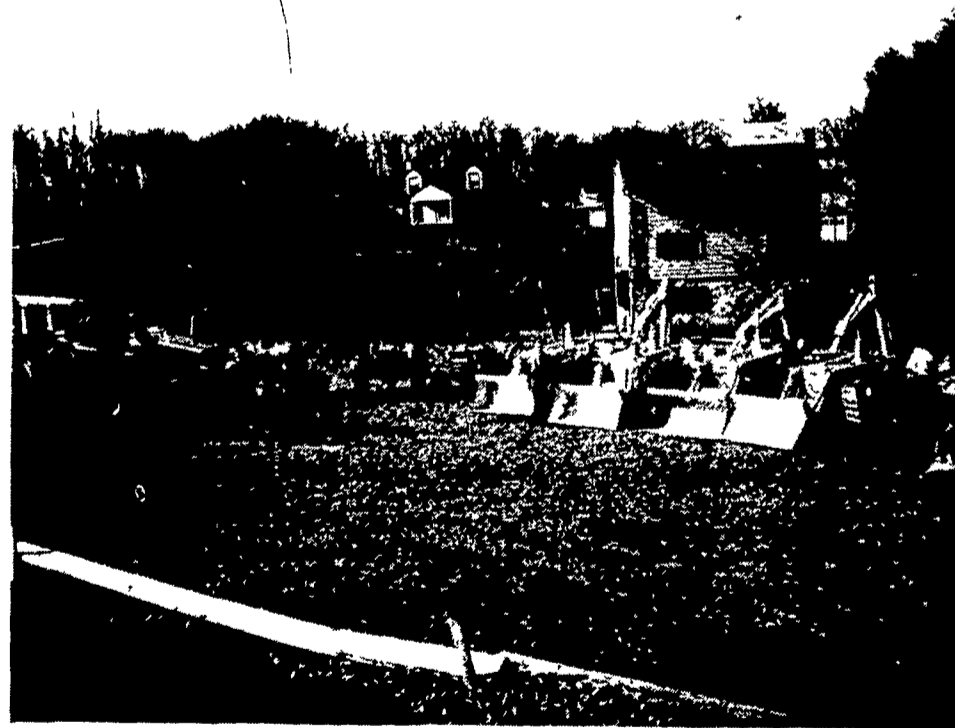
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