

Parke Named PLAlA Head

(Continued From Page 1)

castrated a hog or sheared a sheep. All present knew that Parke, although he doesn't have a farm background, is an important figure in Pennsylvania agriculture, and has been ever since he became executive vice-president of PennAg Industries Association in 1959.

During a pre-election interview in his Ephrata office, we asked Parke to talk about his career and about his perception of the changing forces which affect agriculture.

"When I was approached about this job with PennAg - which was then known as the Pennsylvania Millers and Feed Dealers Association - I was executive secretary for the Pennsylvania Retailers Association. The directors at the time were looking more for someone who understood associations rather than someone who knew a lot about agriculture. And I certainly 'fitted' that description."

member firms rely on their association for employee life and health insurance, news about the things that affect their business, a monthly bulletin - "The Grist" - and feed tags.

"We print a lot of feed tags for our members," Parke explained, "mostly because we review the wording on those tags. The statements on a dealer's feed tags must comply with very strict government regulations. We know what those regulations are, and so we can offer a service that no ordinary printer could hope to match."

PennAg membership also conveys the right to call on the association for advice about any area relating to the very complex business of keeping farmers supplied. A grain sampling service is also offered to members, but it's not used nearly enough, in Parke's view.

"Grain sampling should be part of a dealer's regular management practice," he said. Sam Sherk, who works full-time for us, is one of the very few USDA licensed grain samplers in the state, and the only one I know of

outside Philadelphia. His work could help dealers evaluate their sources of supply, it could help them find out what kind of grain they're getting at different times of the year. Sam could help them put money in their pockets, yet he only gets called out maybe 30 times a year.

"We're normally only called in when there's a dispute between one of our members and a supplier. First they call their lawyers, then they call us so we can get the samples to show whether or not the grain has been damaged by heat or something else."

Another association function is lobbying, although this is a duty that varies considerably in its demands on Parke's time. The most recent lobbying issue, and one which did take a lot of time, was the subject of rail abandonments in the Northeast. PennAg members are keenly interested in rail transportation, because trains are the key to survival for many of the firms supplying feed, seed and fertilizer to farmers. If a dealer can be supplied directly by rail at his plant, he can charge his farmer customers \$5 a ton less for fertilizer and grain, according to Parke. "If there is no direct rail service, it costs the dealer at least \$5 a ton to truck the supplies in from the nearest siding," he said. "That \$5 has to show up in everybody's costs, right on down to the consumer."

Parke has been talking for many months now about rail transport. He has been opposing the wholesale abandonment of branch lines, a course which is favored by many railroad officials. "We don't say there should be no abandonments, because some branch lines will just never be profitable. But the only way to decide which lines should be taken out of service is to walk the tracks and talk to the people who depend on the trains."

Parke is hopeful that the U.S. Railway Association will revitalize the rail system in the Northeast. The USRA is empowered by the federal government to try and put the railroads back on a sound footing.

As a member of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Rail Advisory Committee, Parke is urging the state to do what it can to keep needed rail services. One way the state could help, he feels, is to

provide technical assistance to shippers who might want to organize shortline railroads to take over some of the abandoned lines which could result from USRA decisions.

Besides railroads, Parke keeps an eye on a few other regulatory and legislative areas. "We actually don't have much day-to-day lobbying activity," he points out. "We're more interested in monitoring situations, to keep PennAg members informed on the things that directly affect them. Sales tax, for example. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Act - OSHA - is something we watch. I'm also part of a committee to work with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture on a new pesticide law."

As Parke talks about the business of supplying farmers, it comes through very clearly that he is deeply involved in Pennsylvania agriculture. And it is more than a professional involvement. He serves agriculture in a number of unpaid positions. The presidency of the PLAIA is only one. Parke, a graduate of Duke University, is also a member of advisory council to Penn State's College of Agriculture. That committee is nearly always filled with Penn State alumni.

Parke is a Lancaster resident. His wife, Francis, is women's page editor for the Lancaster New Era. The Parkes have two daughters. Linda, the oldest, is married and living in Washington, D.C., where she does public relations work for a telephone company. The other daughter, Donna, is completing work for her PhD in biology at Yale. In January, she will go to Michigan State University on a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to study protein quality in a number of grain crops.

Tobacco Meetings Slated

A series of meetings on tobacco sponsored by the Eastern Lancaster County Adult Farmer Program will take place on November 20 and December 4 each beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Hinkletown Alternative School.

John Yocum, director of the South Eastern Research Farm at Landisville will be the speaker on November 20 and his topic of discussion will include seed bed and field management, seed bed sterilization, weed control and results of numerous trials with tobacco production at the research center.

Yocum is well known for his tobacco research and works with many tobacco farmers in Lancaster County.

At the December 4 meeting, Eugene Brown, president of Hendrix-Dail, Inc., a soil fumigation company in North Carolina with Eddie Nedding, general manager for the company in this area will be speaking on the use of methyl bromide gas for sterilizing soils.

Methyl Bromide has been used for the past several years to discourage nematodes, soil insects, weeds, grasses and soil born insects.

Nema Hires Consumer Education Director

In a move to stimulate egg consumption in the Northeast, Ray Delano, General Manager of the Northeast Egg Marketing Association, (NEMA) has announced the appointment of Mrs. Janet Helgemoe as director of consumer education.

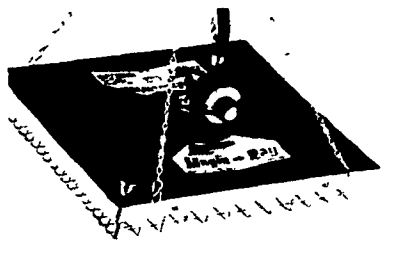
Mrs. Helgemoe will be responsible for a broad program of consumer education and public relations that will include preparation of educational releases on eggs to be directed to food editors of Northeastern daily and weekly newspapers. She will work with state and county extension home economists helping with their TV, radio and newspaper efforts. Cooperation is planned with teachers of home economics and with promotional groups.

Mrs. Helgemoe was born in New England, holds a B.S. in home economics from the University of New Hampshire and has been an active member of the American Home Economics Association since 1953. She is a qualified dietitian, having served an internship at the Scripps Metabolic Clinic, LaJolla, California, with added service as a therapeutic dietitian at Lawrence General Hospital in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

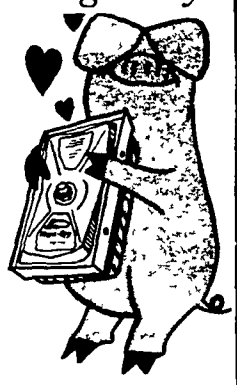
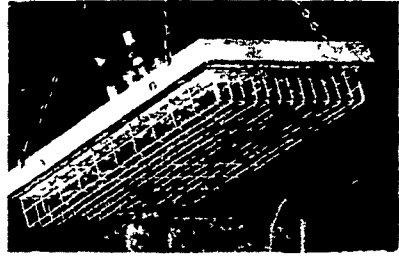
Mrs. Helgemoe was a member of the panel of home testers for Betty Crocker Kitchens from 1960-1973. She has studied journalism and has written for the Portsmouth Herald at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, as well as for other papers in Florida and California.

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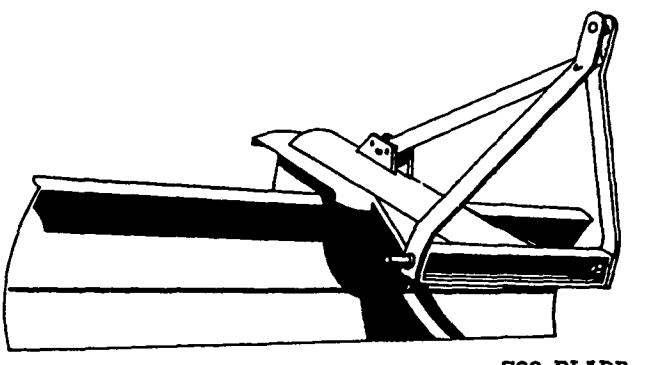



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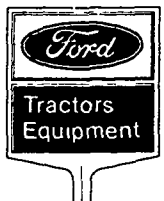
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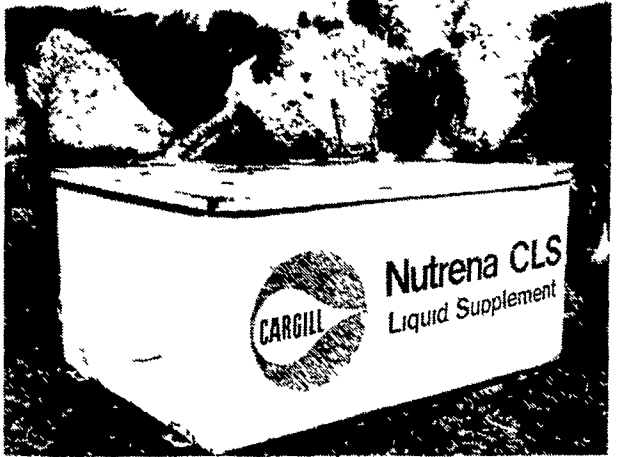


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