

Damage Should Be Reported



Ned L. Clark, left, of Shamokin turns the presidency of PennAg Industries Association over to Phillip M. Spalding, York on January 1, 1975.

Spaulding Heads PennAg

Phillip M. Spalding, York begins 1975 as president of PennAg Industries Association, a state-wide association of agribusinessmen who buy from and sell to ag producers, succeeding Ned L. Clark of Shamokin. In reviewing the events of 1974 Clark said,

"1974 was a mixed bag for agriculture, as it was for the rest of the economy. Grain farmers realized a good year if local weather gave them a crop, but farmers dependent on livestock faced high input costs and low market prices for their products. We hope that 1975 will see a better balance.

"Although the quality of Pennsylvania's 1974 corn crop was not up to par due to the influence of weather, the quantity harvested shows we have the ability to produce in Pennsylvania and continued increased grain production seems to be the answer most experts predict will correct

our imbalanced food economy.

"1974 was a year when food supply no longer was ignored or taken for granted by consumers. The problems of malnutrition and starvation world wide were forcibly brought to everyone's attention by the Food Conference in Rome. Solutions to these problems will affect our domestic markets as well."

In response, P. M. Spalding who is president of York Flour Mills, York, said, "We look forward to 1975 as a year of challenge and opportunity rather than problems. There is no question that we must improve our transportation system, correct our credit and commodity markets, strengthen and expand our food potential in Pennsylvania, but this can only be done with prudence, not pessimism. This will be PennAg's New Year's resolution."

Nearly one month after high winds and snows pummeled western Pennsylvania, the extent of storm damage to farms remains uncertain, according to the Pennsylvania Agriculture Department.

Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Jim McHale said it was essential to pinpoint farm damage that occurred in a nine-county area following the Dec. 1 snowstorm so that farmers could receive aid in the form of federal emergency loans.

McHale explained that the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) routinely surveys this kind of damage. "But since ASCS' local Disaster Review Boards had no early reports of extensive farm damage, we decided to supplement ASCS' efforts with our own surveys," said McHale.

In a report received in the middle of December, ASCS estimated that 1,500 to 2,000 farms had been affected by the storm with an average loss of \$200 to \$700 per farm for a total of \$1 million in eight counties.

However, ASCS conceded that this estimate could double or triple when the "off" production of dairy cattle and poultry flocks is calculated.

ASCS termed farm damage in three counties,

Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland, as severe. Damage in five counties was considered moderate. These include Allegheny, Beaver, Cambria, Indiana and Washington Counties.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture included a ninth county in its survey, Greene County.

While damage to buildings and corn crops still in the fields was reported, the greatest losses were attributed to the effects of power shortages on feedings, watering and milking dairy herds. Western milk dealers had reported a severe drop in milk supplies one week to two weeks following the storm.

McHale said it was obvious that total losses to western Pennsylvania farms would exceed \$1 million "when we know how many dairy cows were dried up after being thrown off their milking schedules."

The secretary pointed out that his department's own survey was producing far more drastic disaster figures. "For example," said McHale, "our survey of Fayette County is giving us an average per farm damage well above \$3,000."

He cited one poultry farm in Fayette County that reported a \$12,000 loss. With no electricity to run pumps for water and fans, this farm

lost 3,000 chickens which caused an egg loss of 13 cases per day.

Another Fayette County poultry farm reported an \$80,000 loss resulting from a collapsed building and a loss of 4,000 chickens.

A dairy farm in that county sustained a loss of \$3,000 when ten cows went dry and a load of meat was lost.

McHale said his depart-

ment will continue its survey with the aim of getting USDA to declare the nine counties in western Pennsylvania a disaster area, enabling farmers to secure emergency disaster loans.

Good Humor?

Kids overheard in a serious conversation: Boy "Kiss me" Girl "NO" Boy "Kiss me" Girl "No" Boy "Kiss me and I'll give you half my ice-cream bar" Girl "OK"

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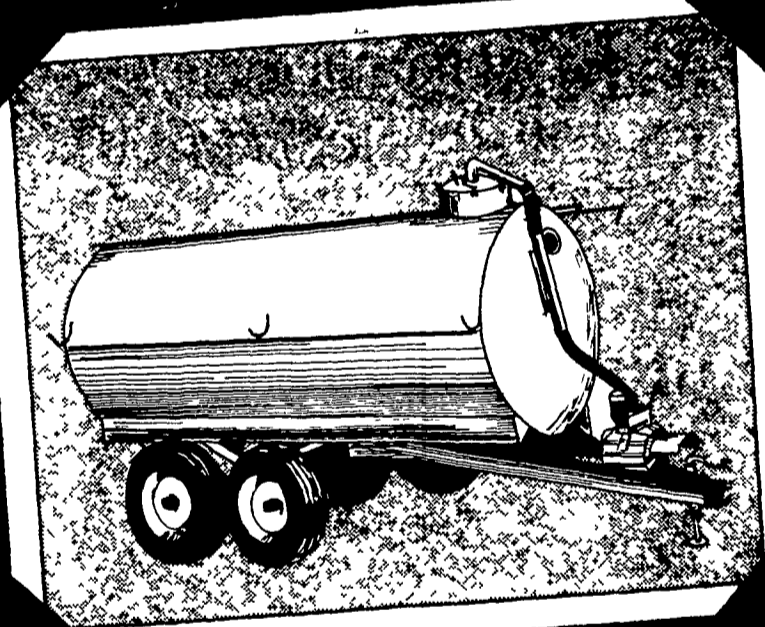
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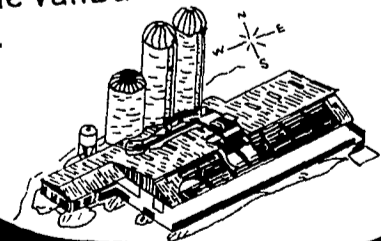
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