

Penn-Jersey prepares Midwest tour

By: Dieter Krieg

O'Hare International Airport, the first stop on a tour taken by Penn-Jersey Harvestore representatives on July 9, is a city in itself. Complete with multi-level ribbons of superhighways that snake their way to and through the huge complex, it is known as the world's busiest airport - approximately 3,000 flights per day.

Modern hotels, terminals and parking garages spring up out of the flat expanses of northern Illinois terrain. There's bumper-to-bumper traffic on the highways; rows of buses and taxis, not to mention thousands of people and several hundred airplanes ranging in size from a Piper Cub to huge jumbo jets.

The occasion for the Harvestore tour was two-fold: The A.O. Smith Company, manufacturers of the familiar blue Harvestore silos, recently opened the doors to a new all-electric plant which covers more than nine acres of America's "heartland." Nearby is the site for the 1975 Midwest Farm Progress Show, considered to be the largest of its kind in the world.

Penn-Jersey Harvestore of New Holland is making plans to charter jet transportation to the big show, and was previewing the site. The show is scheduled for late September and will feature all kinds of agricultural machinery in action. Farmers and agri-businessmen who wish to join the Midwest tour this fall may make their reservations now by calling Penn-Jersey Harvestore.

After arrival at Chicago's O'Hare airport - only 90 minutes away from Harrisburg by jet - the group drove by car to DeKalb, Illinois, the home of the new Harvestore manufacturing plant.

Harvestore's new plant draws most of its energy from the area's nuclear power companies. There's a direct high-tension line leading right into it. And for good reason. The new facility depends entirely on electricity to run the fur-



The James Willrett Farm, near DeKalb, Illinois, will be the site of the Midwest Farm Progress Show, billed as the greatest on Earth.

naces, motors, and lights. The cost of this energy requirement is \$100,000 per month.

Features of the new 298,500 square-foot plant include a million-dollar press which exerts up to 2,500 tons of pressure to stamp the plates used in making the blue silos. A bolt machine turns out bolts at the rate of 6,300 per hour. The electric furnaces fire up to a temperature of around 1,600 degrees Fahrenheit. Staring through it from a good distance, yet still close enough to feel the heat, one observer noted "You'd get a suntan in a hurry if you decided to streak through there."

When in full operation, the new facility will turn out two new Harvestore silos per hour, and use up 1,500 gallons of the company's unique glass-coating formula in less than six hours. Electronically - controlled

"guns" spray the glass coating on to sterile, electrically - charged sheets of steel. Later the metal plates proceed through the furnace where the glass coating is permanently fused with the steel. This is also the time when the grey-blue color turns to the characteristic blue. "It's the cobalt in the powdered - glass mixture which gives it the color," explained Charles Enloe, who heads Penn-Jersey Harvestore.

"There's not many people working in the plant," one visitor commented. Another responded: "Machines don't talk back or go on strike." Considering the size of the factory, there were only a handful of people working, and once the plant is in full operation, only approximately 300 people will man the monstrous machines and furnaces.

After lunch in down-town

DeKalb, served by waitresses dressed in colonial costumes, the group proceeded to the Farm Progress Show site. Travelling mostly on straight, flat country roads, we were surrounded by tall corn and bushy soybeans that stretched as far as the eye could see. Although it was only the ninth of July, some of the corn was eight feet tall already. James Willrett, owner of a 1,400-head beef cattle operation, noted that "things have never looked better for this time of year." Hopes for bumper crops and lower cattle feeding prices were high.

Willrett's 1,150 acre farm will be the site for the two-day Farm Progress Show on September 30 and October 1. He has kept all of his beef cattle in total confinement on slatted floors for the past ten years and averages about two and a half pounds of gain per animal per day.

The 60 by 225 foot barn allows for 18 square feet of space per animal and has a capacity of 550 head. Numerous fans provide ventilation. A cluster of nine Harvestore silos provide feed. The ninth one was just built last month, with the inscription: "50,000th Harvestore Silo, built June 11, 1975."

Willrett, a friendly, tanned individual feeds his cattle on corn silage and high moisture corn and figures eight pounds of feed to be equivalent to one pound of gain on a 90 percent air-dried basis. As is, the feed to gain ratio is 12:1.

Manure storage below the building has a capacity of five months, although Willrett pumps it out more frequently.

Most farms in northern Illinois appeared to be very well taken care of. But there were no dairy farms. Here and there the visitor could see the remains of a dairy barn and barn yard. Close to town there were abandoned barns with sagging roofs and broken windows. Urban sprawl was evident in Illinois, as it is most anywhere.



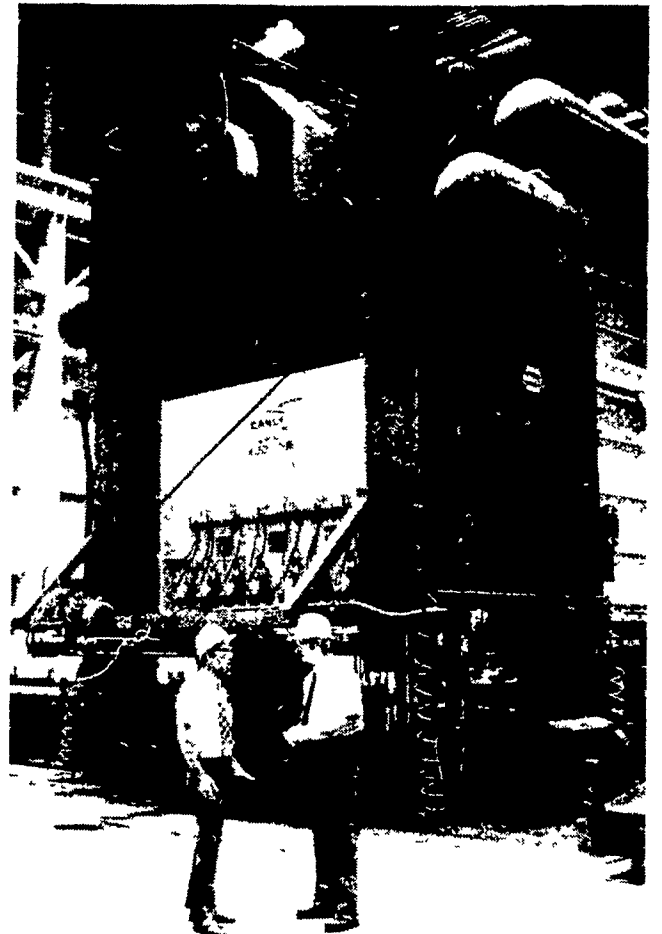
Frank Possessi, standing 6 feet 3 inches tall, is dwarfed by Illinois corn on July 9, 1975.



James Willrett, right, talks with, left to right: Frank Possessi, Narvon, Joe Kelly, western regional sales manager for Harvestore, and Charles Enloe, of Penn Jersey Harvestore.



Visitors from Pennsylvania found this one to be quite different from those found here.



Visitors in the Harvestore plant are dwarfed by the million dollar press, capable of exerting 2,500 tons of pressure.