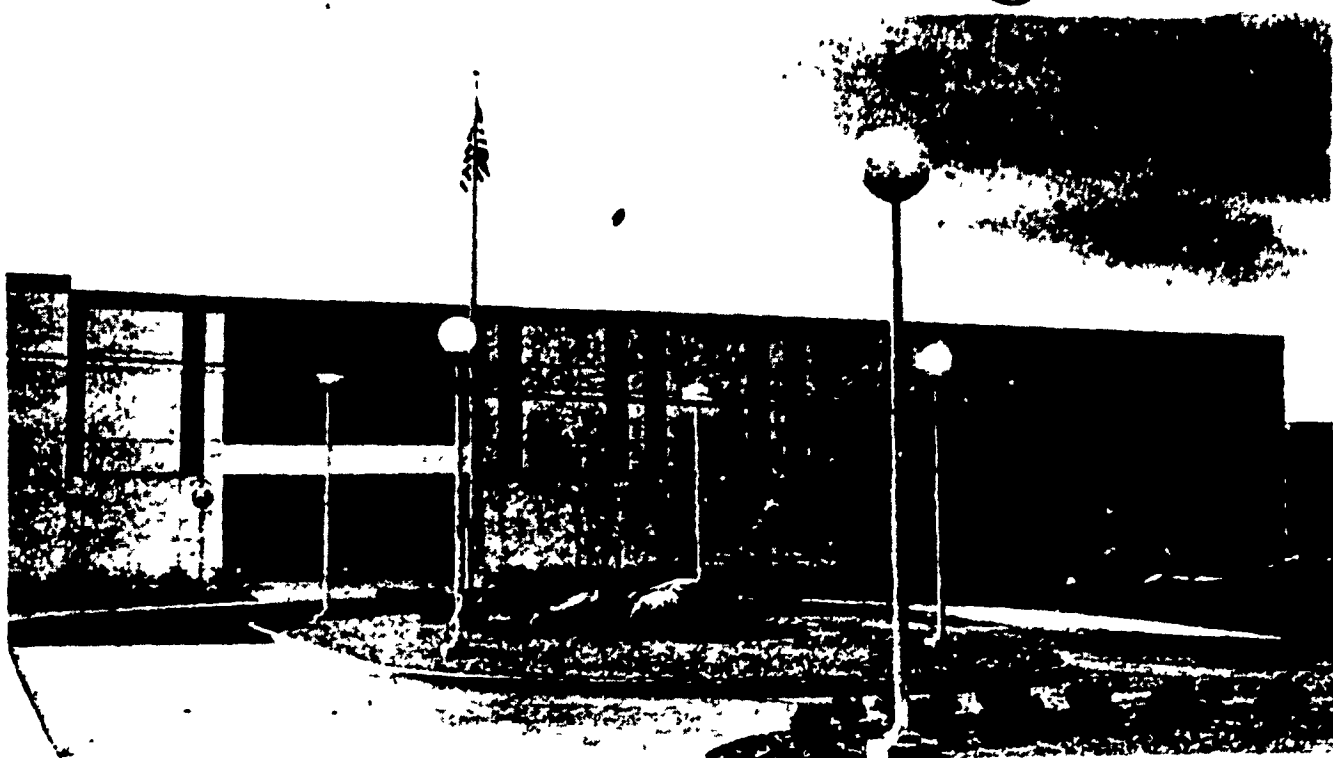


New Berks ag. center pulls it all together

By Pat Bradley
Berks Co. Correspondent
The formal dedication of the Berks County Agriculture Center was a big event on Oct. 30, 1974. It was attended by businessmen, political leaders and farm organization leaders.
But, that was last year. This year there was no celebration on Oct. 30. It was just "business as usual," according to Herbert Wetzel, associate county agent. And so it was during this reporter's visit.
There are five ag-related agencies located in the building — the Berks County

Cooperative Extension Service, the Berks Conservation District, the Farmers Home Administration and the Soil Conservation Service.
The advantages of having all these agencies in the same building are many. First, it is easy for people to transact their ag-related business. The consensus of opinion among the agencies' employees was that more people have come to the building than did when most of the agencies were located in the Reading Court House.
The second advantage is that the different agencies



The spacious Berks County Ag Center, now one year old, offers farmers "one-stop" services and allows inter-related offices to work together more closely. Another advantage of the Center is the

huge parking lot. And unlike at the Reading Court House, where the ag offices were formerly located, parking is free here.

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can work with each other more easily. The closeness has a definite advantage, according to Albert Trexler, executive assistant for the Berks County Conservation District. Trexler is especially pleased with his office. The reason being that the Conservation District had no base of operation before its present office. Trexler would either work out of his car or anywhere that he could find an empty desk.

Ralph Horst, assistant county superintendent for the Farmers Home Administration agrees that the new location has facilitated business, and he particularly likes the large parking area.

The new location of the Center has definitely opened communications between the agencies as well as with the farm public. Although there has been an increase in the number of farmers coming into the center, there has been a decrease of urban

residents stopping in "just to talk." But, according to Wetzel, urban residents have kept in contact with the Center either by phone or through the mail.

The other facilities of the Center include several conference rooms, an equipped kitchen - for home economics and their related demonstrations, and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 300. These rooms are used almost daily and

offer another benefit for farm related groups.

Even though there was no "birthday" celebration for the Ag-Center, its many advantages are appreciated by its employees and members of the farm community.

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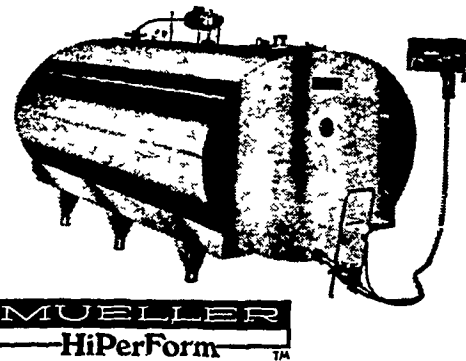
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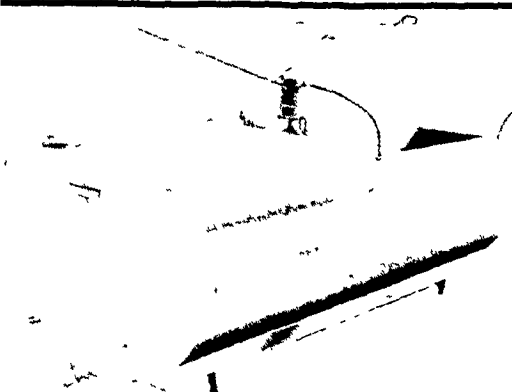
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