

# Agricultural future is bright

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products. She is, in effect, competing for U.S. farm products along with consumers in most other parts of the globe.

Turning his talk to the subject of Penn State's role in food production as it relates to "A New Commitment to Agriculture," the topic of his speech, Beattie noted that the student enrollment in the College of Agriculture has increased from 1287 in 1970 to 3463 in 1975. Enrollments in the associate degree programs have increased by 40 per cent in the past five years; and graduate degree candidates have increased by 16 per cent.

"Sixty-five per cent of the students studying agriculture at the University are from urban areas, and 25 per cent are women," Beattie pointed out. "This gives me the best indication for optimism for the years ahead," he added.

But the number of students studying agriculture and the increased awareness sweeping the nation aren't the only reasons for the Dean's optimism. He also

cited booming farm exports as reasons for his bright outlook. Last year agricultural exports were worth nearly \$23 billion — by far the largest chunk of all our foreign trade. Farm exports, Beattie said, were responsible for this country's favorable trade balance in spite of high oil prices, etc. Figures show that one out of every four acres of U.S. farm land is used to produce food for abroad and that demand is likely to increase dramatically in years to come. According to 1975 statistics, one dollar in every five earned by U.S. farmers comes from foreign countries.

During the past ten years, the farmer's share of the dollar spent for food has varied from a low of 37 cents and a high of 46 cents. On the other side of the picture, a farmer's investment has increased from an average of \$36,000 in 1965 to \$150,000 last year.

Pennsylvania agriculture is on the upswing, according to Beattie's report. Last year farmers in the Keystone State generated nearly \$1.4 billion dollars worth of in-

come, which makes it the state's number one industry. The trend is very likely to continue. In fact, Pennsylvania agriculture is actually growing in the number of farms and total acreage, the Penn Stater informed the group. Within the next couple of years, the number of farms in the state is expected to increase by 2,000 and the total added land brought into production is forecasted at 300,000 acres.

Penn State and the Extension Service play important roles in the continued development and expansion of agriculture, Beattie said. Both work together for the delivery of education and services based on research. While the farmer is still the main beneficiary of agricultural research at the University, work at University Park and elsewhere has taken on a much broader field. The total environment is now being considered. In cooperation with the Extension Service, the University is disseminating information which is designed to make the best use of a community's

resources, the Dean explained.

Beattie singled out some impressive Lebanon County agricultural statistics to nail down his reasons for an optimistic outlook.

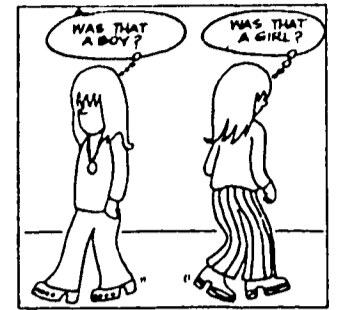
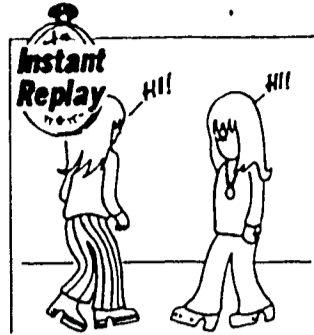
"There are 1130 farms in the County," the head of Penn State's College of Agriculture began. "Last year you produced \$33 million worth of food — with the dairy industry accounting for \$13.6 million of that and the beef operations taking credit for \$8.7 million. In addition, Lebanon County agriculture provided 1,800 ag-related jobs which in turn generated \$12 million worth of income," he concluded.

The 2½-hour program, held here at the Fire Hall, continued with remarks made by Aletta Schadler, home economist and County Extension Director in the absence of Newton Bair who is currently on sabbatical leave in the Bahamas. In reviewing the work and acceptance of the Extension Office, Mrs. Schadler states: "We are very fortunate to have the whole-hearted support of the county commissioners."

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, March 13, 1976—13

A report of the 1975 Extension Programs was made available to everyone who attended, with additional remarks coming from Marion Deppen, assistant director of the Capitol Region; Cheryl Reitz, home

economist; Denis Hoke, county agent; and Patricia Krall, 4-H supervisor. The Extension Office's secretary, Marilyn Szerba, was given a special plaque in recognition of 10 years of service to the organization.



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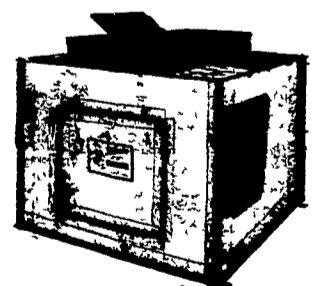
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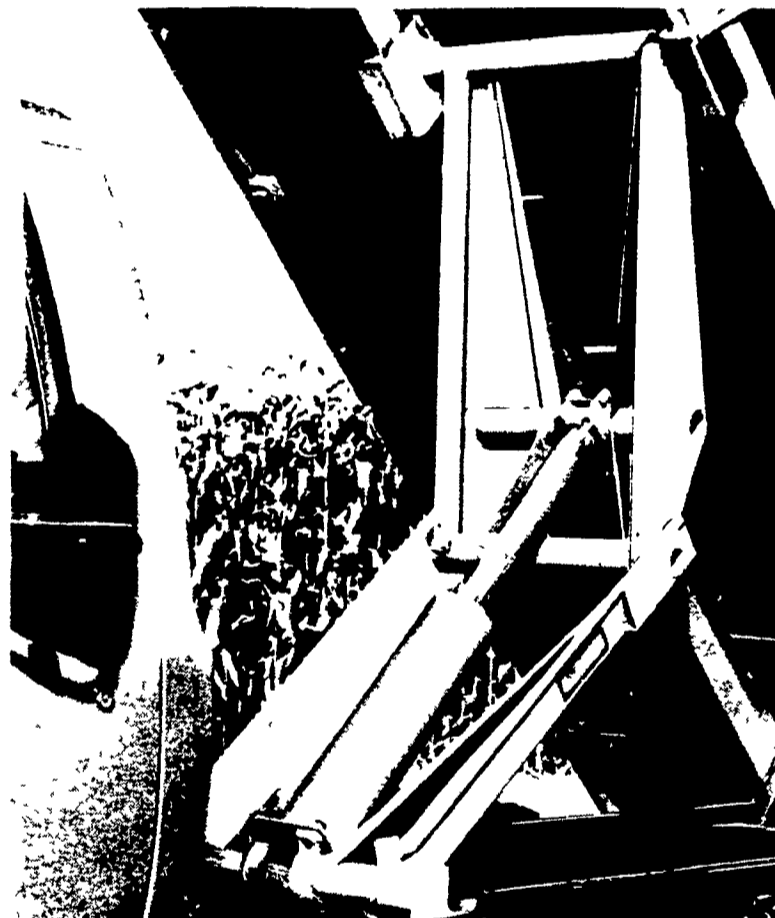
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