



Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Raymond J. Kerstetter (center) speaks with Leon Kirkoff (left), Pomona Grange master, and Donald Duncan (right), president of the Berks County Dairy Association, at the Berkshire Mall.

## Kerstetter

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Speaking to farmers at the Reading Fair Banquet later that same evening (see separate article), Kerstetter mentioned his visit to the dairy week exhibit stating, "I was impressed with the dairy exhibits and the people who were looking at them. It just goes to show, we have to promote our products."

During a brief press conference at the mall, Kerstetter congratulated Berks County farmers saying, "I have seen nicer

corn on the drive down here (travelling on Rt. 183 in the Bernville area) than I have seen anywhere else."

Asked to comment on the progress of State Bill 219, the secretary recalled that it had come up at a legislative review earlier in the day. He regretted, however, that due to the numbers of bills considered, he was unable to report on the exact status of Bill 219, but furthered the opinion, "I am sure it will be passed."

On the matter of the

disposition of state hospital farms, Kerstetter emphatically expressed his opposition to proposals which would "piecemeal it out." He has debated the issue before the House, and is opposing a bill which has already been advanced which would "pick up just the Harrisburg land."

He added, "We should not turn out the land... we should keep it in agriculture. Once we lose it, it will be gone and you will just see more townhouses. We can make more washing machines and tractors," he emphasized, "but not more land."

Kerstetter did advance two possible solutions to the state hospital farm problem.

"Unless you inherit land from your father," he pointed out, "you cannot start a farm today because the cost is too high. The farms could be used on a lease basis to give young farmers a start." He further proposed that "when you have land close to an institution, you should use it for agricultural research."

Kerstetter spoke briefly about the Farm Show complex in Harrisburg, mentioning that plans have been made to refurbish it. In addition to a number of general repairs, particularly to the electrical wiring system, improvements will include a new dairy barn.

Asked about his plans for the future, Kerstetter, who assumed the position as secretary of agriculture approximately six months ago after serving as deputy secretary of agriculture for six years, replied, "I told the governor I would stay only a year."

Although suggesting that he may stay on longer than the promised year, he added, "There are still a lot of things I would like to do, and I don't need to draw a paycheck to do them."

Kerstetter concluded the session by saying, "I was born and raised on a farm, and I have never left," adding, "I have worked a lot of places, in Washington and all over, but I always kept a residence on the farm."

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## Angus show slated

Members of the Western Pennsylvania Junior Angus Club have scheduled their annual field day and show for Saturday, July 17, reports Dale Rains, president. The event will be held at the Mercer County 4-H Park located one mile north of Mercer on Route 19.

Activities will get underway at 10:00 a.m. with registration followed by a

fitting and demonstration and show for junior Angus heifers and steers.

Exhibitors and spectators are asked to bring a basket lunch and beverage will be furnished by the junior organization.

For further details, contact Dale Rains, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, 16137.

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