

PennAg outlines 1977 challenges

EPHRATA, Pa. - Energy and environmental regulations are the two biggest challenges facing the businesses that supply Pennsylvania's farmers, according to W. H. Andrews, Jr., the incoming president of PennAg Industries Association. Andrews is president of H. O. Andrews & Sons, Inc., a feed firm in Mapleton Depot. PennAg is a trade organization of some 400 agribusiness firms in Pennsylvania.

Andrews said feed dealers and other small businesses were hard hit this year by a rate increase granted to one of the state's largest power companies in July. The Public Utilities Commission made the rate increase retroactive to July, 1975. Electric power is a significant factor in the cost of manufacturing feed, Andrews said. "There was no way feed dealers could go back to their customers to make up for the added expense. We couldn't tell farmers that we just didn't charge them enough for the feed they'd bought the year before."

Agribusiness is very dependent on the welfare of the farmer, Andrews noted, and the competition for his

business is very spirited. An unexpected increase in the cost of doing business, especially a retroactive increase in such a basic need as electric power, could make agribusiness firms more cautious in their pricing policies.

"That means more money out of the farmer's pocket," Andrews said, "and eventually higher food costs."

Environmental regulation has much the same effect, Andrews feels. While recognizing the need for clean air and water, he opposes rules requiring the installation of expensive equipment which has little or no impact on environmental quality.

Farmers, Andrews added, can be especially harmed by too-stringent regulations affecting their farm operations.

In the coming year, Andrews said PennAg members will be kept informed of energy and environmental developments as well as other areas relating to agriculture and their businesses. A number of educational seminars have been planned, as well as the yearly grain meeting and the annual convention.

Andrews said his personal

goal as PennAg's new president will be to do what he can to increase and maintain the organization's membership. "There are a lot of good programs here, but many dealers don't know enough about them," Andrews said. "PennAg exists

because the agribusiness dealers want it to exist and because it does a good job for those dealers and for agriculture in general.

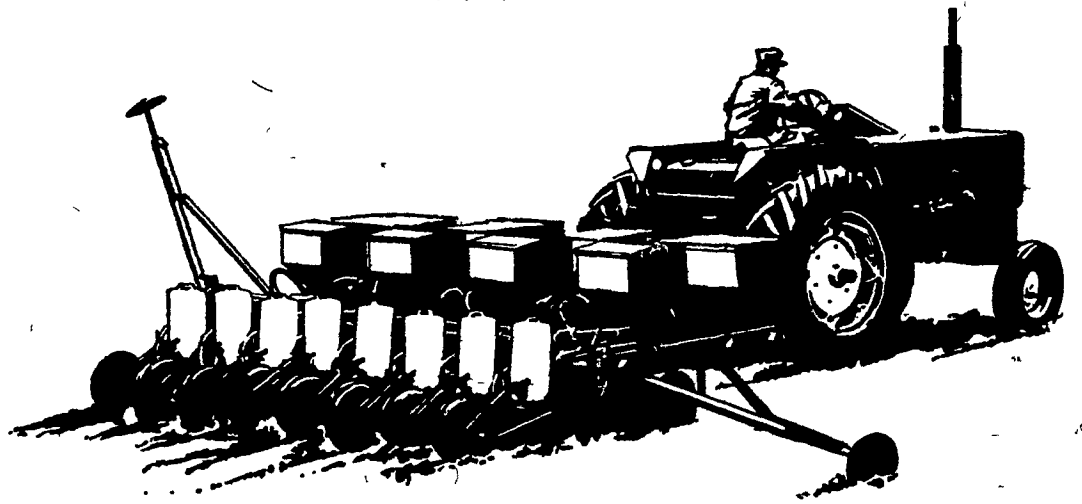
"We have a lot of excellent support for PennAg, and I'd like to see that support continue."

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No-till meeting set

GETTYSBURG, Pa. - The third annual Mid-Atlantic No-Tillage Growers Convention will be held here Friday, Jan. 7, at the Sheraton Inn. The event is sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Services of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia, in cooperation with agri-business industries.

The program begins at 9:50 a.m. and adjourns at 3:30 p.m. Subjects to be covered during the morning session include: cover crops for no-till corn production; the no-till forage program in Ohio; no-tilling small grains; and a look at no-till equipment used throughout the world. In the afternoon there will be presentations on economic and safety considerations in grain drying, storage and handling on the farm; plus cost comparisons of no-tillage, minimum tillage and conventional tillage systems. There will also be a grower panel discussing problems encountered in no-till farming.

A free lunch will be provided, courtesy of sponsoring agri-business firms. Delaware growers interested in attending the convention should contact their county agent in Newark, Dover or Georgetown for tickets. If there is sufficient interest, it may be possible to provide bus service to the meeting.

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