

# DER regulations shouldn't create rent problems

HARRISBURG - A Department of Environmental Resources official has told farmers who operate rented lands and landowners who rent out their property that the State's erosion and sedimentation control regulations should not lead to canceling of rental agreements.

At a recent meeting with farmers in the northeastern part of the state, Afton Schadel, chief of the DER Division of Soil Resources and Erosion Control, heard complaints that absentee landowners were citing the erosion and sedimentation controls as their reason for not renewing their upcoming year's leases.

The farmers own one or two farms and rent several others to more efficiently use their equipment, labor and livestock.

Apparently causing the concern is a July 1, 1977 deadline in the regulations

for development and implementation of an erosion and sedimentation control plan for lands to be plowed or tilled. Schadel was told that absentee and out-of-state landowners believe they must plant their farms in grass by the deadline date. Many landowners will only rent their land on a year-to-year lease as they explore other land use options.

Schadel pointed out that the July 1, 1977 deadline refers only to preparation and implementation of an erosion and sedimentation control plan designed to protect the Commonwealth's waters from sediment pollution. Planting grass is only one of many measures which can be used to adequately control soil loss from sloping land. Practices such as crop rotation, contour farming, cover cropping and minimum tillage often are used by farmers in their land management programs and provide adequate protection.

The Department holds the landowner responsible for polluting substances that enter Commonwealth waters from his property, Schadel said. But the Department allows earth disturbing activities that could cause potential pollution from sediment to be conducted when plans to control the accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation are prepared and implemented.

Such plans are the responsibility of the landowner and a copy must be available at the site of the earthmoving project.

Schadel emphasized that the state's erosion and sedimentation control program is designed to allow landowners or developers the flexibility to develop the best management practices that will work on a particular site. These practices must be set forth in a plan that has been developed by someone trained and experienced in erosion and sedimentation control. Farmers if qualified, or with assistance available from conservation districts, can prepare adequate plans that allow

normal farming operations. Permanent measures and facilities such as diversion and cropland terraces, grade stabilizing structures and protected waterways that allow intensified land use are the responsibility of the landowner but must be maintained by the operator. Many of the temporary or annual measures used to control soil erosion already are used by farmers in their land management programs and provide adequate protection. The maintenance program and the annual

practices can be incorporated into the renter's annual lease.

In stressing that there is no need for landowners to cancel contracts because of the erosion and sedimentation control requirements, Schadel also pointed out that landowners who decide against renting their land will be accepting a financial tax burden without receiving an annual income from the land since some municipalities consider idle land to be development land for tax purposes.



## 'Country Style' pork products receives new standards

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Establishment of a new standard for pork products - labeled, for example, "country," "country style," or "dry cured" ham or pork shoulder - was announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The standard is designed to help maintain those "country-cured" characteristics - including taste and texture - traditionally associated with products which, years ago, were prepared by the application of salt and the removal of natural moisture through drying or aging under natural climatic conditions.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) said over 200 written comments were received from processors, industrial, national, and

State associations, consumers, and other public respondents on the proposal which was issued in Sept., 1975.

About 160 of those comments favored the standard, eight opposed it entirely, and less than 40 expressed objection to some part of it, APHIS officials said.

The new federal meat inspection standard defines products such as "country style ham" or "dry cured pork shoulder" as uncooked, cured, dried, smoked or unsalted meat food products made from a single piece of meat from the ham or shoulder respectively. The finished product must be capable of being distributed without refrigeration and weigh at least 18 per cent less than the fresh uncured product. In addition, it must meet specific preparation

requirements, including the following:

"The product must be treated for the destruction of possible live trichinae."

Optional ingredients under the standard include nutritive sweeteners, pepper, spices and flavorings, plus sodium or potassium nitrate and sodium or potassium nitrate if used as prescribed.

Use of the new standard will not be required until July 1, 1978. This allows processors time to adopt necessary processing procedures and obtain new labels. It also eliminates the need to destroy current label stocks - an additional cost usually passed on to consumers.

The new standard was scheduled to be published in full in the Jan. 18 Federal Register.

## Deere sponsors OYF program

TULSA, Okla. - The non-profit United States Jaycees have announced that Deere & Company will be the national sponsor of their Outstanding Young Farmer program for 1977. The upcoming OYF Awards Congress, which honors the four outstanding farmers from throughout the country,

will be held March 20-22 in Bismarck, N.D.

Deere & Company, Moline, Ill. the world's largest producer of farm equipment, traces its involvement in American agriculture to 1837 when its founder, John Deere, developed the first successful self-scouring steel plow. In sponsoring OYF,

Deere & Company hopes to bring further public recognition to the role American farmers have played in the nation's growth and development, and to participate with the Jaycees in recognizing the outstanding achievements of young farmers who take part in the program across the country.

The Outstanding Young Farmer program is coordinated each year by The United States Jaycees with sponsorship assistance from interested outside companies or organizations. Initiated as a grassroots project in the early 1950's, OYF annually honors the top young farmer from each state who has made significant achievements throughout the year. The national competition results in the naming of four top honorees in the nation.

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