

Students form poultry servicing corporation

By JOANNE SPAHR
 MANHEIM, Pa. - The Manheim Central High School vocational agriculture department has come up with a first for Lancaster County. Realizing a need for a large scale servicing operation in the booming poultry business in the area, the ag department has formed a corporation known as "MAPS." "MAPS" stands for Manheim Agriculture Poultry Service and is made up of 35 paying members and 40 non-paying members. While there are other poultry serving groups in the county, commonly referred to as

chicken catching crews, Manheim's is the first to be incorporated.

Although the organization is legally a nonprofit corporation, Jess Erway and Glenn Spangler, vo-ag teachers and members of the legal board of the corporation, contend that it is run like an incorporated cooperative.

"With this set-up, the members learn what it feels like to run a business from both the manager's as well as the worker's standpoints," says Erway. "They know that if they fool around in this type of business, they are hurting themselves as

well as their co-workers, instead of just the employer."

The cooperative was formed to develop interest in agricultural careers by locating work experience for 14 - 21-year-olds; to provide money for agricultural projects; and to help aspiring young farmers start stockpiling funds.

"Let's face it, if they want to get a start in farming, they have to earn money in anyway they can," says Spangler.

Part of the rules governing the organization state that a student may belong to the cooperative until he is out of school three years and no longer. And, girls, as well as boys are welcome as members.

The governing head is made up of two boards of directors. Because the majority of the members are under 18, and not legally able to run the business, a legal board was formed to oversee all transactions. That board is comprised of Earl Geib, president; Glenn Spangler, vice president; and Jess Erway, secretary-treasurer.

A second board, made up of students, and responsible for most of the business carried on by the group, is the managing board. Heading that is Dennis Kulp, manager; Larry Hershey, secretary; Dean Ziegler, Jay Gainer, and Stephen Hershey.

Kulp, in the position of manager, has the responsibility, among other things, of rating the workers after a job is completed.

"We have our own rating system, and if a worker isn't capable, he goes to the bottom of the list," explains Kulp. The organization has approximately 100 - 125 employees at all times, and for one job can send out up to 50 students.

Because of the size of the crew, they are set up to handle large scale jobs in the range of 60,000 birds. And, almost all of the catching

crew is experienced, which Erway sees as a plus for the organization.

"They've done work in almost any type of housing operation, and they know from experience how to handle the birds," he states. Novices are worked in one at a time and watched carefully to assess their abilities.

The group also has an honor code and sanitation rules they follow as a matter of course.


"We are really hoping that people will assess these individuals as mature enough to go into a house and work without adult supervision," remarked Spangler. To clarify his statement he said, "Many times people feel 16 and 17 year olds aren't mature, but these people are running a business, and I'd trust them on any job."

Dennis Kulp and Larry Hershey agree. They say they've already done a few jobs on their own and everything went well. They are looking forward to more work and to getting their corporation rolling.



Members of the managing and legal boards of the Manheim Agriculture Poultry Association look over the books. Seated are Dennis Kulp, manager, (left) and Larry Herhsey, secretary of the managing board. Standing is Glenn Spangler, vocational agriculture teacher and vice president of the legal board of the corporation.

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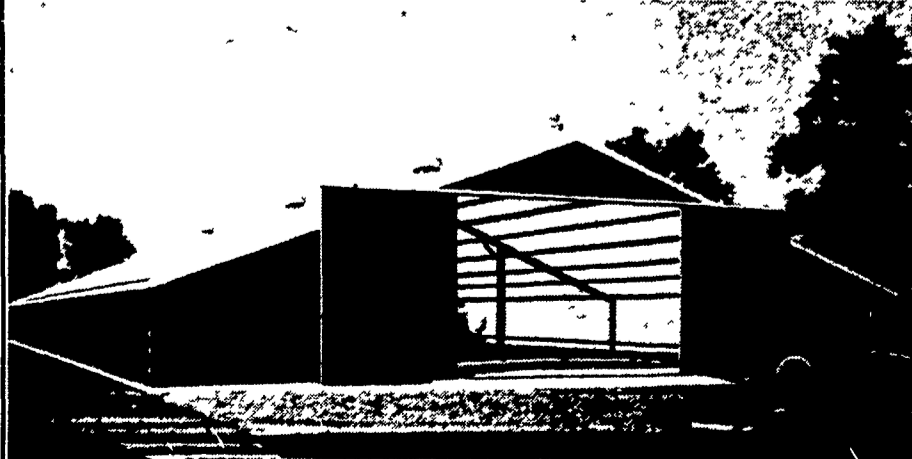
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