

Peach Council president outlines challenges

MARTINSBURG, W.Va.-
Paul McPherson of New

Park, Pa. outgoing president of the National Peach Council, and NPC staff members Robert and Betty Phillips all talked about what the National Peach Council had done during the last year and has planned for this year, in making reports to the Council's recent

annual convention in Kalamazoo, Mich. McPherson, who keynoted the convention sessions with a talk entitled "Some Challenges for National Peach Council," touched on a number of the challenges facing the organization. Among the challenges he

mentioned were an emotional dispute concerning the use of certain national convention funds; improvements in the Council's food editor releases by the addition of color photos; and the need for changes in the industry's public relations and educational programs, better communications within the industry, and greatly expanded research programs concerning the production and handling of peaches.

McPherson pointed out that a large segment of today's population knows little or nothing about where fruit is produced or "how some government actions and capricious Mother Nature - and I put them in

that order on purpose - can affect the quality and quantity of the fruit that is available."

Changes in the eating habits of Americans will also have a terrific impact on the fresh fruit business and fresh consumption, McPherson said. Fast food chains, industrial and government cafeterias, nursing homes, hospitals, schools, and military installations, are just a few of the places which are feeding increasing numbers of people.

To change some of the problems, the Pennsylvania fruit grower said, there is need for additional information going to schools, and a much greater effort is needed to get peach people and-or peaches on

television shows, station breaks or any other place where they will be seen.

On the communications front he reported there is a great need to expand the council's monthly publication to include more information about new government regulations, more about industry and research developments, new products, producers profiles, and consumer feedback.

And for research money, he told the peach growers that they must learn to influence the actions of government to get the funds which are needed for long-term research projects which cannot be funded by individual producers or even by the states.

Robert Phillips, executive secretary for NPC, later told how the Council has made many new contacts in Washington, D.C. during the last few years, largely among people who were not previously aware that peach producers had a national organization.

At the same time, Phillips explained, the Council has been working with other groups which have similar problems with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and other government agencies to try to get regulations modified or, when possible, get changes made before the proposals moved too far along in the policy-making sections of the agencies.

He also pointed out that the Environmental Protection Agency is operating under several different laws, rather than just one law, which makes it more difficult to come to grips with the various problems.

OSHA, on the other hand, was given broad powers under one law, and the power was put into an agency under the Department of Labor, which has long been oriented toward worrying more about special protection for individuals than the effects which such protection might have on overall economic or social problems.

Educational activities of the National Peach Council were discussed by Betty Phillips, who is the Council's home economist.

Included in the current programs are four special annual releases to more than 200 daily newspapers across the nation; helping sponsor a booth at the annual American Home Economics Association convention; distributing materials about peaches through cooperation in Good Housekeeping workshops for home economists; and circulation of a slide series, "The Peach Story," to various schools.

Included in the cookbooks are all the tested recipes which were in the files of National Peach Council, plus many other recipes and other material which Mrs. McPherson gathered from other sources in Pennsylvania and some other states.

The cookbooks are available from either National Peach Council, 170 Box 1085, Martinsburg, W.Va. 25401, or from Passion for Peaches Publisher, Route 1, Box 66, New Park, Pa., 17352. The cost for individual copies is \$3.95 plus 50 cents for postage and packaging.

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