

Sale of development rights - a deal with the devil?

By **JERRY WEBB**
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NEWARK, Del. - Expect to hear a lot more about green acres in the years ahead as society wrestles with the problem of our ever-shrinking open space.

something. They have laws or are developing laws that will preserve farmland as a valuable natural asset. As strange as it may sound, farms in some parts of the East are an endangered species.

These new preservation programs are going to cost money and they're bound to earn non-farm scorn. Farmers who participate may have to endure some abuse for taking "government handouts." In spite of

this, the green space programs in their several forms may be the only way to keep some land in agriculture and to assure a little open space between cities.

Don't be surprised if all of the mid-Atlantic states have open space programs before too long. And they'll cost millions in taxpayer dollars.

Consider Suffolk County, New York, on Long Island, where urban pressures are tremendous. That county's government has started a program that will eventually spend \$75 million to keep 15,000 acres from the developers. Farmers who choose to participate sell the development rights to their land to the county. They keep title to the land but must agree to use it only for agriculture or open space. If they sell, the restriction is passed on to the new buyer.

In New Jersey a pilot program is getting under way in Burlington County. Five million dollars has been earmarked to buy development easements from farmers. Payment will

be based on the difference between market value and value for farming purposes.

The farmer who agrees to sell his development rights agrees that no new construction will take place on his land except for normal farm operations. That restriction stays with the farm no matter who owns it from then on. It's permanent.

That feature may discourage farmers who like to keep their options open. They'll be reluctant to tie themselves and their heirs to the family farm forever. The know that then they're through farming, or when their heirs are through, they'll want to cash in on prevailing land prices. In New Jersey that usually means very high development prices. It will take a large easement payment to discourage a farmer from gambling on the future.

Those high payments are going to seem out of line to the city dweller who realizes that a farmer will be paid a nice sum to just go right on farming - something he

planned to do anyway. What they must realize, however, is that he's actually selling his future. It could be a "deal with the devil" in the proverbial sense of the word.

Remember this is a pilot program. It's just getting under way in New Jersey and the experts don't really

know what's going to happen. Their projections will be much more convincing in two or three years. By then they hope to be able to expand the knowledge gained in four townships into a statewide program.

In the meantime many other states are watching.

Heisey shows

(Continued from Page 107)

Class 5: 1. Beth Chapman, Manheim R5; 2. Scott Sipling, Marietta R1; 3. Ron Zimmerman, 4. Richard Strauss, 5. Earl Geib.

Class 6: 1. Kevin Rohrer, 2. Tony Eberly, Denver R2; 3. Steve Hershey, 4. Steve Hershey, 5. Peg Mullen.

Class 7: 1. Nelson Breneman, 2. Gordon Long, Columbia R3; 3. Ramon Hunt, 4. Steve Hershey, 5. Tony Eberly.

Mediumweight champion: Nelson Breneman.

Mediumweight reserve champion: Ron Zimmerman.

Heavyweight Market

Hogs

Class 1: 1. Steve Strauss, Ephrata; 2. Rick Strauss, 3. Steve Hershey, 4. Gordon Long, 5. Barry Geib.

Class 2: 1. Bob Strauss, 2. Bernadine Gish, 3. Bruce Sipling, 4. Bruce Sipling, 5. Kerry Boyd.

Class 3: 1. Steve Strauss,

2. Earl Geib, 3. Kerry Boyd, 4. Barry Geib, 5. Charlie Brown, Millersville R1.

Class 4: 1. Stanley Heisey, 2. Bernadine Gish, 3. Bob Strauss, 4. Bruce Sipling, 5. Earl Geib, 6. Bernadine Gish.

Class 5: 1. Stan Heisey, 2. Rick Strauss, 3. Kerry Boyd, 4. Bernadine Gish, 5. Barry Geib, 6. Earl Geib.

Heavyweight Champion Stanley Heisey.

Heavyweight reserve champion: Bob Strauss.

Champion of show Stanley Heisey.

Reserve Champion of show Nelson Breneman

Lightweight pairs

Champion Kevin Rohrer

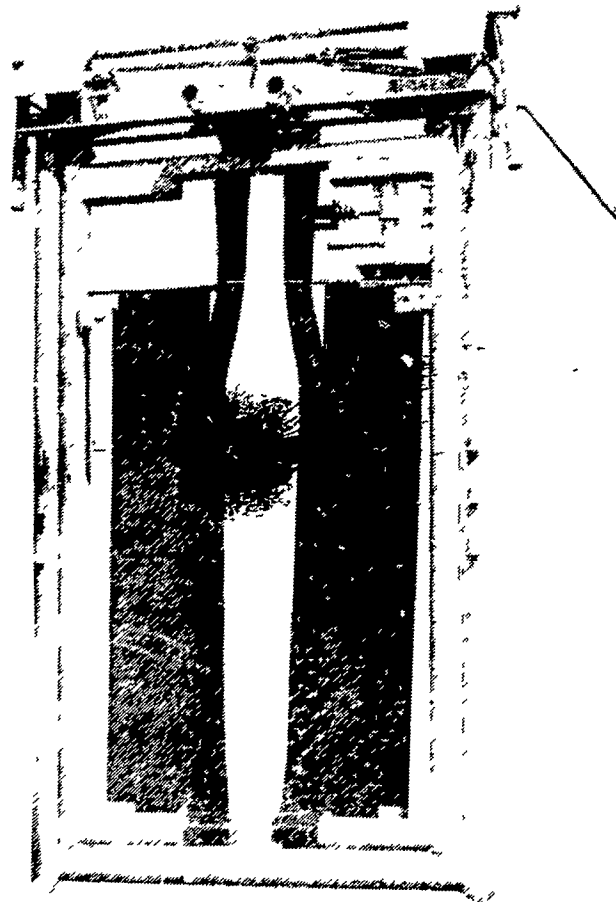
Mediumweight pairs

1. Beth Chapman, 2. Scott Sipling, 3. Earl Geib, 4. Barry Geib 5. Earl Geib

Heavyweight pairs

1. Bob Strauss, 2. Bernadine Gish, 3. Steve Strauss, 4. Barry Geib.

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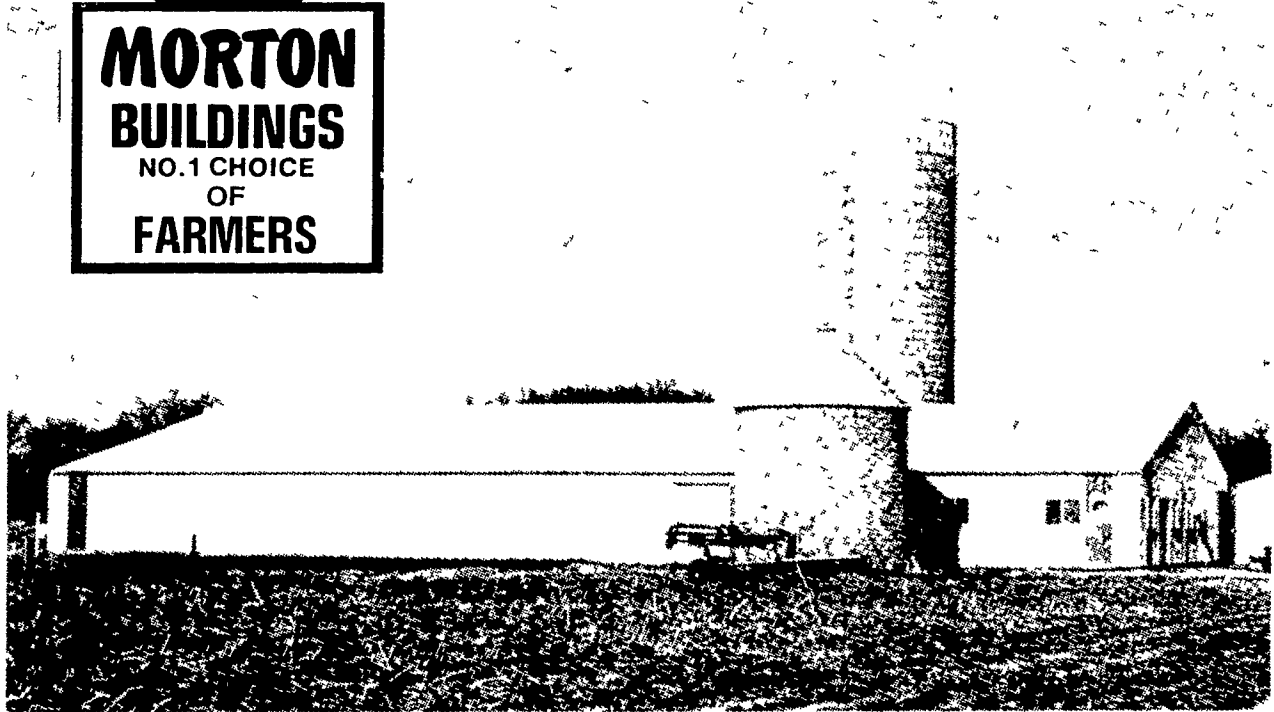
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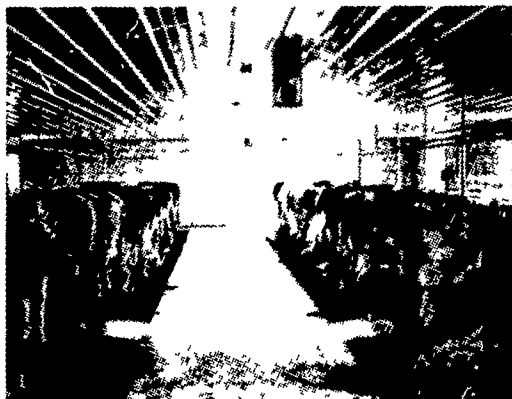
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