

Purchase of development rights considered by conservationists

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts has called for a state policy to protect and preserve productive farmland, maintain family agriculture and its traditions of family life, conservation of the state's natural resources and preservation of open space for recreation.

It has proposed creation of a State and Municipal

Agricultural Open Space Commission so that state and local governments may cooperatively administer an agriculture and open space program.

A key component in the proposal would be assignment of a \$15 million half share of the state's one per cent real estate transfer tax to the commission for use in purchasing development rights of prime farmland.

Half of the two per cent transfer tax goes to local municipalities. About \$3 billion in sales are recorded annually.

Another component would be prohibition of the use of eminent domain in duly constituted land-use districts.

Lancaster County farmer and conservationist Amos Funk, a leader in the fight to preserve farmland, strongly



Amos Funk

favors the purchasing rights policy. Although the measure is controversial, Funk's viewpoint is gaining support. Joining him in favor of the idea are two Lancaster County legislators, Reps. Noah Wenger of Stevens and Gibson Armstrong of Refton. Both have come out stating that they will consider the proposal to use state real estate transfer taxes to buy development rights of prime farmland.

Wenger is a member of the House Agriculture Committee.

Now is the time

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addition, beef prices are very favorable at this time and a good outlet for cows that have passed their best years. If this culling process could be done on a voluntary basis, it might be one way to help the surplus problem, and maintain the good price for the milk that is to be marketed.

TO TAKE

THE PROPER TIME

According to the calendar, some farm operations are a bit behind schedule, but nothing real serious at the moment. I realize that it is quite normal to get in a hurry under these conditions and rush to get the work done. However, we point out that this extra speed might be a safety hazard and also, does not give farm machinery a chance to perform as it was designed. Too much speed on tractors and trucks is surely a safety hazard. Also, too much speed with grain drills and corn planters will surely result in poor stands and reduced income per acre. We urge that farmers take the time to do the job properly in the first place; good planning and good management is timely in order to avoid serious accidents and dissatisfaction with crop stands.

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badly. The products we raise have been replaced in many diets by "low cholesterol substitutes." There is now a large body of expert opinion which believes that the diet-heart disease question is in disarray. In fact, the weight of evidence seems to show that high sugar, low roughage food intakes may be the real culprit. Think how our cattle would do on this kind of diet. We seem to know more about feeding cattle than about feeding humans.

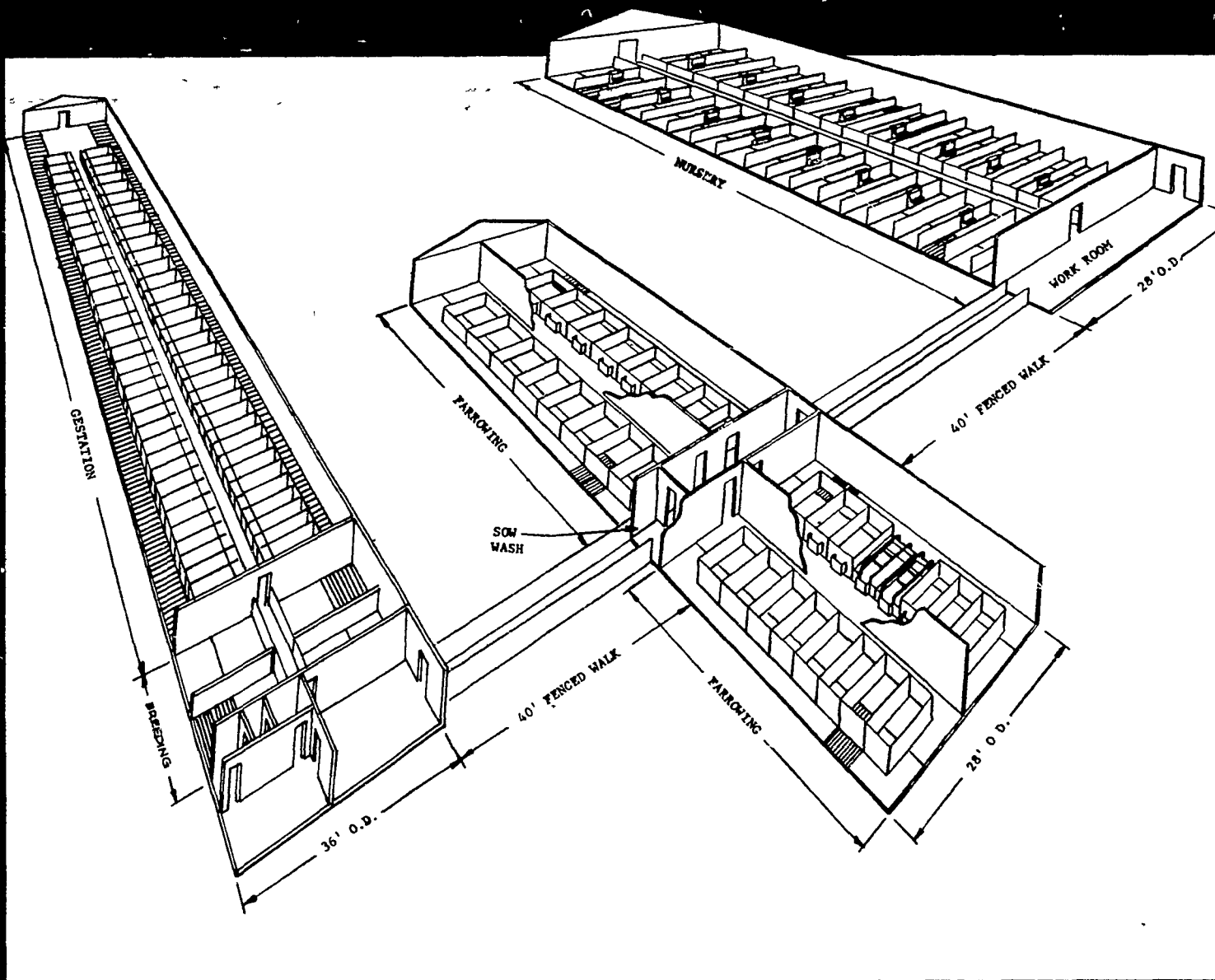
There is also considerable evidence to suggest that cancer rate is lower among people who do eat eggs.

I believe that the answer to improved prices for farmers is honest information regarding wholesomeness of farm products. Natural foods are better for humans than synthetic substitutes. When the consumer knows this, he will buy more of what we sell. Then we will have more profitable farm operations. We don't need more hand-outs, which in the long run mean more taxes, more regulations and lower profitability.

Sincerely,
Norman Aamodt
Coatesville

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LANCASTER, PA. 17603
(717) 393-5807

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the Centerville Exit

