

Walker bill gives tax credit to keep land in agriculture

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Bob Walker (R-16-Pa.) last week introduced legislation aimed at providing a "new direction in the Nation's efforts to preserve farmland."

The Walker legislation would provide tax incentives to farmland owners who

agree not to use or permit their land to be used for a purpose other than farming. He explains:

"This proposal represents an effort to do something positive and forward-looking to keep agricultural land from being developed irresponsibly without initiating programs in-

volving the 'big brotherism' of national land use policies.

"I have introduced this legislation to assure that farmland would be preserved but on the basis of individual landowner initiatives and not on the basis of bureaucratic decision-making in Washington.

"Our farmland is such a precious and highly valuable natural resource that it must be adequately protected from encroachment of development but we must do so without jeopardizing the property rights of individual of Americans," Walker said.



Robert Walker

Under Walker's proposal, a tax credit equaling five per cent of the fair market value of a farm would become available to the owner of the land if he or she agreed not to permit its use for any other purpose than farming. The amount of the credit would be allotted in one-third shares over a three-year period. The owner of the farmland would be eligible for credit on a one-time basis by signing an agreement with the secretary of agriculture formalizing a permanent commitment to keep the land in agricultural production.

individual decision-making rather than governmental decision-making with regard to farmland preservation.

2. It would compliment rather than complicate local zoning provisions.

3. It would permit local units of government to have defined areas of farmland which could be assessed for taxation on their value as farmland rather than on their developmental value thus decreasing the property taxes on prime agricultural land.

"I fully realize that this legislation will not be enacted in this Congress," Walker said. "However, the legislation does provide a new vehicle to permit Congress to focus on a key environmental issue in very specific terms."

Walker listed three principle advantages of his approach to farmland preservation.

1. It would provide for

Angus contest held



Diane Krause, Slatington, (left), and Carol Krause, Slatington, (right), represented Pennsylvania in the 12th National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest, July 20-21 in Des Moines, Iowa. Diane and Carol won an honorable mention award in the contest. The contest was sponsored by the American Angus Association, and featured 70 state showmanship winners from all over the United States.

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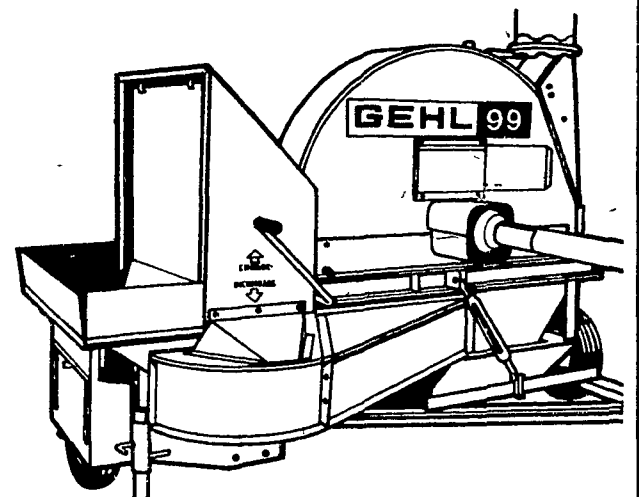
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