

# Water samples show no evidence of radiation

**HARRISBURG** — The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Geologic Survey recently issued the following joint statement:

"The state and federal governments have been doing extensive testing to determine if the accident at Three Mile Island has resulted in the contamination of surface and ground water.

"During the past two weeks, we have collected and analyzed more than 300 samples of drinking water and water from rivers, streams and the ground. In each case, no radioactivity was detected.

"The samples were collected by the Department of Environmental Resources, the U.S. Geologic Survey and water suppliers. They were analyzed by the Environmental Protection Agency here and at its

laboratory in Montgomery, Ala.

"DER has been taking daily samples at four locations on the Susquehanna River downstream from Three Mile Island. All results have been negative.

"We have analyzed samples from all 21 public water suppliers within a 20 mile radius of the plant that draw their water from surface sources. All results

have been below minimum detectable levels.

"We have analyzed samples from 37 public water supplies that draw their water from wells. All results have been below minimum detectable levels. This indicates that there has been no pollution of ground water and that individuals who have water wells have nothing to worry about. Selected water supplies beyond the 20 mile radius are presently being collected

to obtain further background data.

"Waste discharge samples are being collected daily from Three Mile Island. All results so far show the discharge from the plant is within limits set by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

"The Environmental Protection Agency has agreed to provide a monitor that will give continuous readings on the levels of radioactive iodine being

discharged, so any increase can be detected immediately.

"The Pennsylvania Fish Commission will be collecting fish from the river this week to be analyzed. The commission has also helped us collect samples of the plant's discharge."

## Which way are land prices headed?

**UNIVERSITY PARK** — Land has been one of the stars in recent years in terms of an investment that has kept pace with inflation.

However, one of the principal investors in farm land in the past few years has been operating farmers. The high yields and favorable prices for crops have caused farmers to bid land to high levels, points out Fred A. Hughes, Extension farm management specialist at the Pennsylvania State University.

In many areas of the country, farm real estate prices reached levels that make it very difficult and often impossible to pay for the land with the product from it, he notes. There are now 11 states where the average per acre value of farm real estate exceeds \$1000.

"Seven of these states are located in the northeastern United States and Pennsylvania is one of them. The average real estate value in the state is now nearly 2 and one half times the March 1972 value," says Hughes.

"Land values across the nation are still rising, but at a much slower rate. From February 1977 to November 1977, farm real estate values in the 48 original states increased only 5 per cent and in Pennsylvania only 3 per cent," Hughes points out.

Does this mean the end of rapidly rising land values? In many areas of the country where land values are supported by the crops produced, there already has been a reduction in land prices. Unless there is a strong upturn in crop prices that reduction may well continue.

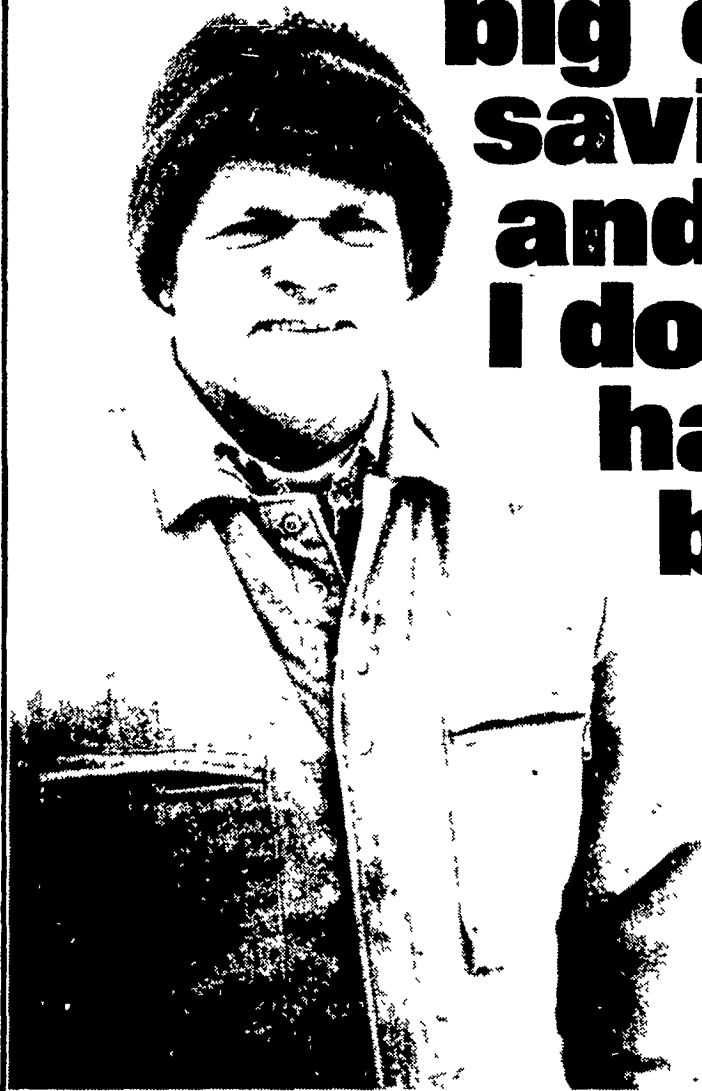
In the long run, land prices tend to adjust toward the productive value of the land. However, there are many factors which tend to slow or counter the forces that normally would move land values lower, the specialist notes.

These include the rate of inflation, declining value of the dollar, uncertainty about the future, and the fact that land is a fixed commodity with limited supply. All of these forces tend to exert greater pressure on land in heavily populated regions than in rural areas.

"In view of these factors, average farm real estate values in the Northeast will probably continue to rise at rates that will be near the rate of inflation, the farm management specialist predicts.

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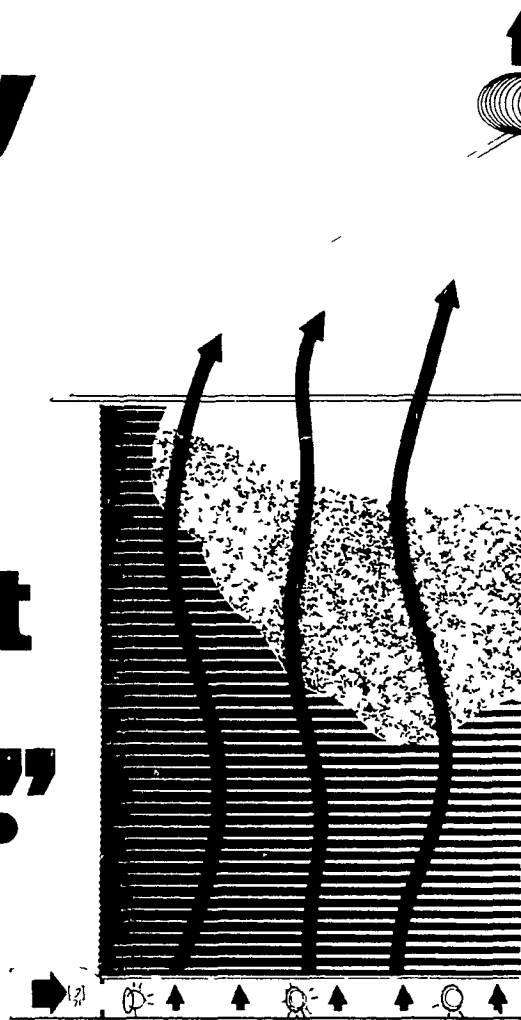


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