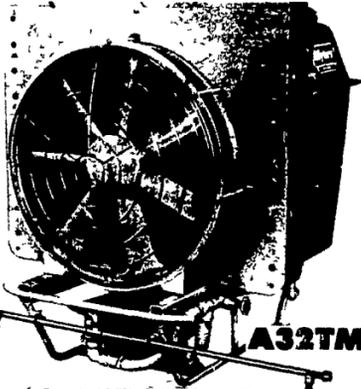


Farmland preservation activated in Maryland

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ANNAPOLIS, Md. -- Maryland's efforts to save productive farmland have begun through the Agricultural Land Preservation program. Five-member Advisory Boards have been appointed and are active in all 23 counties, program regulations were adopted in January 1979 and the necessary forms for landowner participation have been distributed to each county, according to the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

The program is administered on the state level by the Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Foundation of the Maryland Department of Agriculture. The Foundation is a 11-member body whose members are appointed by the Governor.

The program is completely voluntary on the part of owners of eligible farmland and involves the establishment of Agricultural Preservation Districts in which the landowner agrees not to develop his land for at least a period of five years. In exchange, the owner becomes eligible to offer to sell a development rights easement to the Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation,

normal agricultural activities (i.e. noise, odor, night operations, machinery operation, etc.) become protected activities in the District and, in Districts involving more than one property, landowners can assure self-protection from the encroachment of other land uses.

The basic minimum eligibility criteria for land are: 100 acres minimum District size, high productive capability and generally, located outside planned 10-year water and sewerage service areas.

In this first step, District establishment, there is a great deal of interest developing among landowners...the benefits are attractive and if the farmer is committed to farming for at least the five-year period there aren't any detriments.

Once a District has been established the owner is immediately eligible to offer to sell a development rights easement to the Foundation. To sell an easement is to sell only one of the many rights the property owner enjoys...the right to commercially develop the land. When an easement is sold, the owner continues to own the farm or

can sell it, it is private, and the owner and his heirs can be assured that the farm will remain in agricultural use, in most cases permanently.

The sale of an easement results in changing a portion of equity in land into cash equity and easement sale or easement sale eligibility can be used effectively in estate planning through providing a means or equitably dividing an estate while saving the family farm.

For many landowners, a long-term District and thus, continued easement sale eligibility is an attractive option.

The maximum the Foundation can pay for an easement is the landowner's asking price or the difference between the agricultural use value and fair market value of the land, as appraised, whichever is lower. Voluntary applications for easement sale will be considered every year in each county on the basis of competitive bids; a process in which easements to be acquired will be selected in accord with local priorities and a State formula.

The sale of an easement results in compensation for the loss of development

rights; an attractive option for many Maryland farmland owners.

Funds for easement acquisition are now available. To be eligible to sell an easement in Fiscal Year 1980 (beginning July 1, 1979) landowners must have an Agricultural Preservation District established by July and an Application to Sell an Easement submitted no later than July 31, 1979.

Funds available include \$2 million plus revenues and appropriations resulting from actions of the General Assembly this year. At this writing it is estimated that the major bill passed will contribute an additional \$3-\$4 million to the Agricultural Land Preservation Fund, substantially from existing tax revenue sources.

In addition, a number of counties have made substantial commitments for local matching funds for easement acquisitions.

Further information can be obtained from the specific County Agriculture Preservation Advisory Boards or the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Parole Plaza Office Building, Annapolis, Md., 21401.

FFA forestry contest winners named

ELVERSON - Four Twin Valley FFA members participated in the Berks County FFA Forestry Contest on May 8, at Conrad Weiser High School. With Pennsylvania Game Commission Forester Paul Weikel officiating, students identified 20 different trees, then used cruising sticks to measure their diameter, estimated the number of logs from each and calculated the number of board feet of lumber in each tree. Each contestant then recommended whether to cut a tree

and why and told what use would be made of each tree cut.

David Kramer of Conrad Weiser won this contest with John Bastian also of Conrad Weiser second; Martin Miller of Twin Valley finished third, Kerry

Reinhart of Conrad Weiser was fourth, with Eric Eckenroth of Conrad Weiser fifth. Twin Vallians Kim Noyes and Henry Ramsey finished sixth and seventh respectively with Mike Jones of Kutztown eighth, and Brett Strough of Twin Valley ninth.



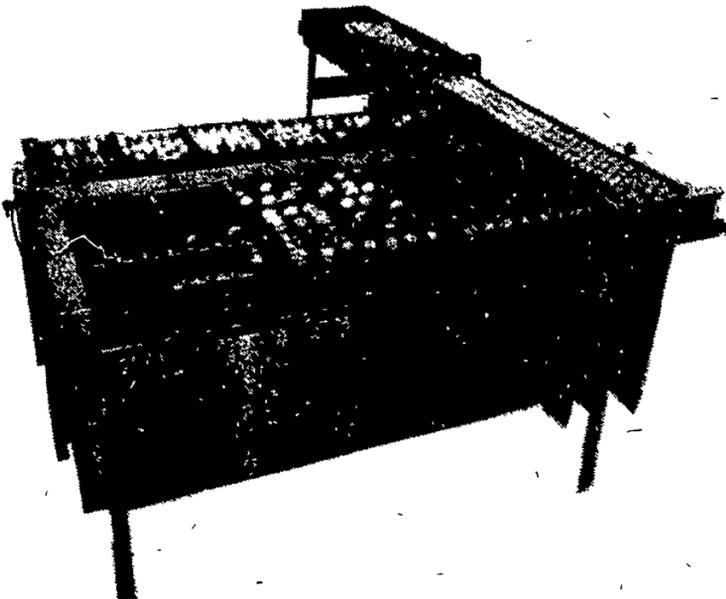
The small metal hoop on a lamp that supports the shade is called a harp.

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