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Barbara Lindemann Several "firsts"

dation.

U.S. Department of

Agriculture official told seed

industry representatives

that the department is

working vigorously to clear

up the confusion over

proposed amendments to the

Plant Variety Protection

Many members enhanced their education through the Agricultural Career Show which featured more than 200 exhibits from agriculture and agribusiness as well as a Hall of States. The National FFA Band, Chorus, and Service Corps gave nearly 500 members the chance to be involved in special activities. One hundred and twenty-two official delegates representing 51 state associations carried on the business of the nearly half member million organization.

The National FFA Alumni Association held their convention in conjunction with the student convention

developers of new plant varieties which reproduce by seed. It is a voluntary program and only those individuals who want legal protection participate. The act gives individual

USDA official explains

Schlei, administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, said the PVPA

provides legal protection to

(Continued from Page 116)

support of the FFA Foun- and provided educational leadership workshops for the young leaders. The Alumni meeting was held to conduct the business of 17,000 Alumni members nationwide.

International guests and Work Experience Abroad were participants recognized during the Friday morning sessions.

The convention closed last Friday evening with recognition of the retiring National Officers and their parents and advisors. Special entertainment for the sessions was provided by The Firestone Tire & Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio. The 1979-80 officers following their installation closed the FFA's 52nd Annual FFA Convention.

proposed plant variety law plant breeders and small companies protection from the merchandising advantages of large companies, she said.

Speaking in Kansas City, Mo., before the American Seed Trade Association. Farm Seed Division and Seedmen's Western Association, Schlei said critics have complained that proposed amendments to the act will lead to thousands of common vegetable varieties becoming extinct.

The critics charge the amendments will encourage a genetic uniformity in vegetable varieties that will undermine advancement made in agriculture.

"This is entirely false," said Schlei.

Since genetic diversity is crucial to the survival of our food supply, it is important to preserve in plant germ plasm repositories all unique genetic traits of varieties no longer available in commerce.

These preserved genetic resources will assure that continued plant breeding will provide a healthy flow and availability of superior varieties both within and outside the purview of the PVPA, Schlei said.

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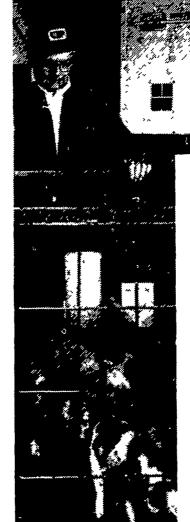
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