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Lancaster Co. SCS has busy year

LANCASTER — The Soil Conservation Service field office in Lancaster County spent a busy 1979, as their annual report reflects.

The staff provided assistance to 641 Lancaster County landowners. Out of those people assisted, 434 people carried out a conservation practice.

One of the main functions of SCS in the county and throughout the state is to help landowners develop a plan of action for conserving their natural resources, soil and water. Last year, the Lancaster unit helped prepare a plan of conservation for 9508 acres.

As if this didn't keep the staff hopping, they also provided landowners with the needed engineering assistance to install over 56,000 feet of subsurface drainage, more than 20 miles of cropland terraces, over 1200 acres of contour

strip-cropping systems, 12 miles of grass waterways, and more than 20,000 feet of diversions. They also have 10 agricultural waste management systems to add to their long list of accomplishments.

According to District Conservationist Warren Archibald, much of the emphasis of the year was placed on serving the small farmer. However, with the increased urban pressures in Lancaster County, the SCS staff has been involved in floodplain management and recommendations on proper use, water quality and storm water management.

Reviewing erosion and sedimentation control plans for the Lancaster County Conservation District has been an activity that kept the staff busy all year long. The SCS'ers also helped civic groups and schools in their

environmental education programs.

Two major areas of activity in the local SCS office involved the Chickies Creek Watershed project and the Land and Water Resources study for the county. The basic data for these projects has been gathered. Further

developments on both of these areas are programmed for 1980.

Lancaster County's soils are being remapped by a team of soil scientists. They reported 137,788 acres were mapped last year, leaving less than one-third of the county to be mapped. SM.

Wenger applauds ag land board

HARRISBURG — Rep. Noah Wenger said he is pleased that a bill which would preserve prime agricultural land was recently signed into law by Governor Thornburgh.

The Lancaster County lawmaker noted that Senate Bill 276 creates the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board. The board's purpose will be to review requests for condemnation of agricultural land and determine whether an alternative exists.

"I have long been a advocate of saving family farms and prime farmland," Wenger said. "This bill is a step towards preserving Pennsylvania's countryside and promoting the preservation of agricultural land."

Wenger said he worked for the passage of a similar bill

in the House since his first term in office in 1977.

"I felt then as I do now that this is a very vital issue, one that needs immediate attention. This law is the beginning of many steps the General Assembly will take in this area," he said.

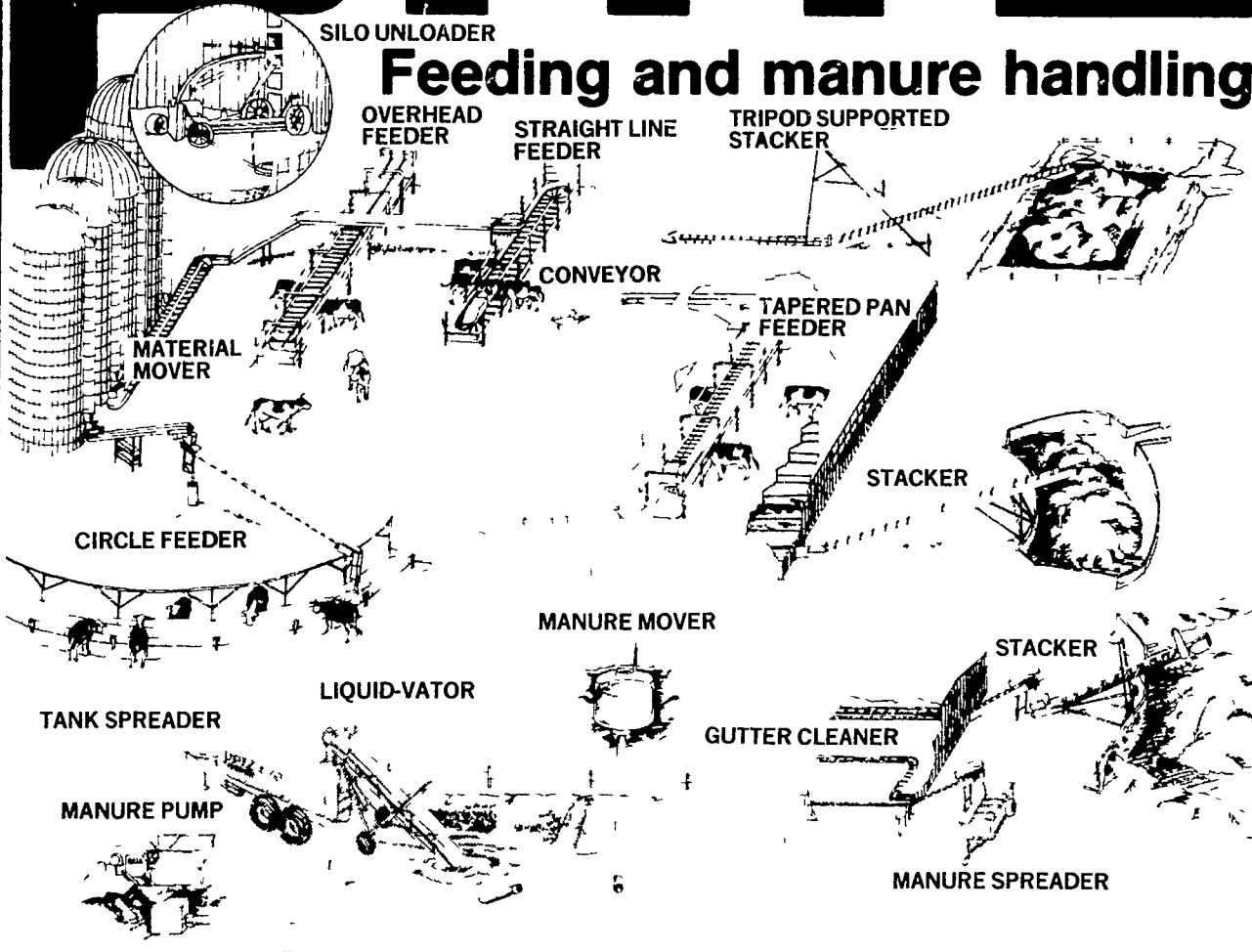
Wenger, Vice-chairman of the Agriculture Committee, said the board will also have authority over agricultural land which is being condemned for the construction of new highways or for landfills used in the disposal of solid or liquid waste material.

In addition, such land which is not improved, would be offered for sale only after the original owner refused to repurchase it at the acquisition price.

"I hope to see this as the beginning of a concerted effort to preserve agricultural lands," he said.

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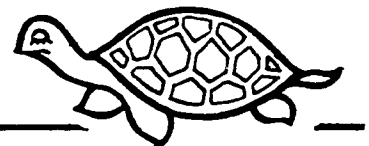
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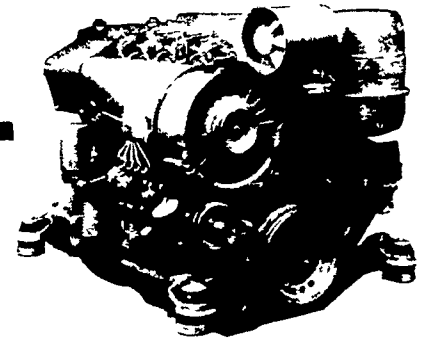
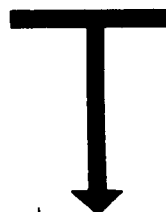
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