

Carson gives up-date on labor regs

BY SHEILA MILLER
HERSHEY — Pennsylvania apple, vegetable, and wine grape growers met in Hershey from Tuesday until Thursday of this past week to catch up on methods of farming, marketing, and legislation.

These farmers met, in conjunction with their counterparts from New Jersey and Maryland, to hold the 121st State Horticultural Association meeting, 1980 Vegetable Conference, and 12th Pa Wine Conference.

The participants listened in earnest to Jan Carson, from the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association. Her topic, current labor regulations, was a subject near and dear to most of the growers.

Carson stressed that the growers become familiar with the proposed regulations printed in the January 11 issue of the Federal Register.

Under the wing of the U.S. Department of Labor, these proposed regs would mandate who and how many people the states' employment services could hire to administer their programs.

The PFA spokesperson stressed these proposals will create problems in the civil service standards currently used in Pennsylvania to fill employment positions.

She also pointed out that the persons hired under these new regs would have to conform to the number of minorities served by the

agency. For instance, if the state employment agency serves an 80 per cent Spanish-speaking clientele in Adams County, then 80 per cent of those hired to administer the program must be Spanish-speaking.

Originally, Carson stated, the Riche order of the mid-1970's provided for an outreach to migrant labor. She explained that if a farm worker walked into an employment agency, this order provided insurance that the person would not automatically be channelled back into a "degrading" farm job.

Judge Riche's ruling created the environment for fair treatment within the state employment service for migrant workers, and provided the dollars to train these people for other jobs.

But, here in Pennsylvania, Carson explained, the Outreach program has been run in consultation with the CETA 303 program.

"Unfortunately, there have been three different CETA 303 programs in the last three years," Carson said.

"The programs were incompetent and were not properly managed, and there may even be a question of fraud and abuse of funds," she said.

She added that the new proposed federal regulations set up the CETA agency, under the Pa. Department of Labor, as an advocate of labor.

Rather, she said, the CETA department and the State departments should be



Over 400 people attended the vegetable, apple, and wine meetings held at the Hershey Convention Center last week. Commercial exhibitors displayed the latest in seed stock varieties and equipment.

there only to complement the relationship between the farmers and the laborers in emergency situations, and areas involving social welfare and health.

She related a case where the CETA 303 people recruited 24 farm workers out of the field in a two week period, and the farmer's tomato crop spoiled.

Other areas of legislation touched on by Carson included Act 93, the Seasonal Farm Labor Act, which PFA will move to amend.

She also brought the growers up-to-date concerning the 12 to 14 cases pending between the U.S. Department of Labor and farmers for FLCRA

violations. She reminded them of the recent ruling made by Judge R. Dixon Herman where the Department of Labor's ruling was not upheld and was reversed in favor of the farmer.

"The Department of Labor is playing a harassment game," she said, "in hopes that the farmers will back down and accept their fines. But, DOL knows that if the farmers appeal the ruling, a similar case has already been ruled on by the same judge that will hear their cases — and the judge ruled against DOL."

Carson also mentioned the H-2 program which she said will give total farm labor

control to the U.S. Department of Labor.

This program, she said, is for the employment of temporary workers, called documented or legal aliens, and has strict guidelines for the farmers to follow regarding the employees' housing, transportation, and food.

Carson said she was skeptical of the H-2 program and the "benefits" it would provide to farmers, citing instances in other states where it actually cost the farmers thousands of dollars.

"The Department of Labor is the greatest enemy of the farmer today," she concluded.

Honey production up 25%

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania honey production during 1979 totaled 3,034,000 pounds, up 25 percent from 1978 according to the Crop Reporting Service.

The yield per colony averaged 41 pounds, up ten pounds from the previous year. The number of colonies however, dropped five percent to 74,000.

Beeswax production for 1979 was 58,000 pounds, up 23 percent from 1978.

The average price received all honey in Pennsylvania in 1979 was 64.3 cents per pound, one cent below the 1978 price of 65.3

cents per pound. The price of all extracted honey sold wholesale in 1979 averaged 56 cents per pound, up two cents from the previous year.

The price of extracted, processed and packaged honey sold retail averaging 91 cents per pound in 1979, up three cents from 1978.

The average retail price per pound for all chunk and comb honey was 95 cents and \$1.15 respectively.

The price of beeswax in Pennsylvania averaged \$1.91 per pound, an increase of 19 cents over 1978.

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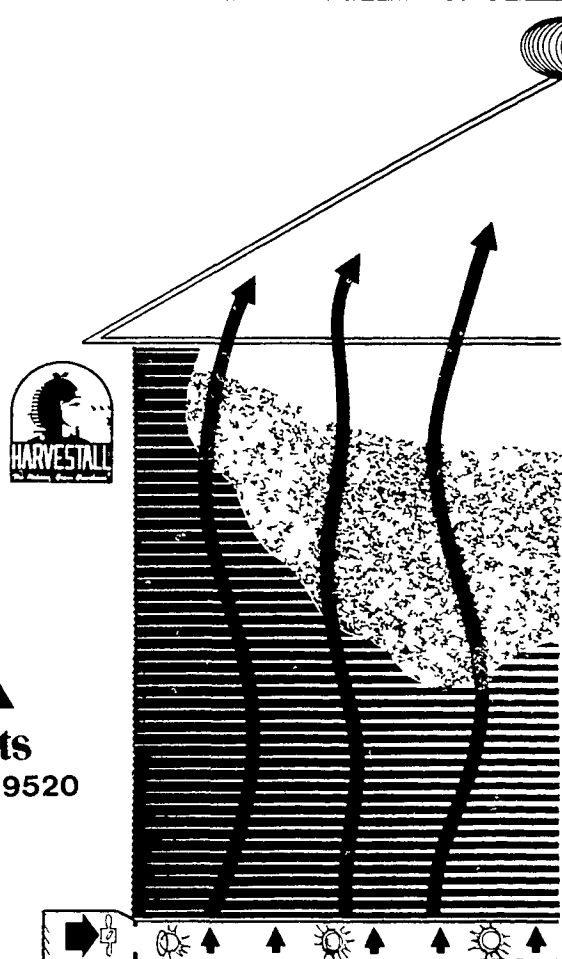
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