

USDA wants to ban PCB containing equipment

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Feb. 29 The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed that federally-inspected meat, poultry and egg products plants be prohibited from installing new or replacement equipment that contains polychlorinated biphenyl.

Carol Tucker Foreman, assistant secretary for food and consumer services, said the proposal is in response to an industrial accident last summer, in which PCB from a ruptured transformer leaked into the drainage system of a slaughtering plant in Billings, Mont. Animal feed produced from the waste in that system contaminated meat and poultry products in 19 states.

"This proposal is one in a series of actions we are taking to protect the public from accidental chemical contamination of the food supply," Foreman said. "USDA is working to reduce the incidence of industrial

accidents and to provide quick and effective cooperation among involved government agencies and industry when contamination emergencies do occur."

The Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency have indicated their intention to propose similar regulations for other food processing plants, Foreman said. Earlier this month, USDA, in cooperation with FDA and EPA, asked food manufacturers and related industries to voluntarily remove PCB-containing equipment from their plants.

Other actions under consideration by USDA include a request for legislative authority to require owner identification of all animals sent to slaughter and authority to quarantine animals on the farm, a new system to establish coordinated communication early in a

contamination emergency and regulations to require food processors to remove equipment containing PCB from their facilities.

PCB is a class of highly toxic industrial chemicals which have been widely used since 1929 in transformers, heat transfer equipment and capacitors for their stability, and fire and heat resistance.

The manufacture and distribution of PCB was

banned after July 2, 1979, by the EPA. However, the EPA rule allows limited continued use of PCB in totally-enclosed systems such as capacitors and transformers, and this equipment is present in many food processing plants.

USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service has responsibility, under federal meat, poultry and egg products inspection acts, to

assure that these food products do not contain any adulterants. Because PCB is highly toxic, its presence in food processing plants represents a substantial hazard to human health and the environment.

The proposal to ban the installation of PCB-containing equipment was published in the February 29 Federal Register. Copies are also available from the Meat

and Poultry Inspection Program, FSQS, USDA, Washington, D.C., 20250.

Comments on the proposal should be submitted by April 30 in duplicate to: executive secretariat, attention: Annie Johnson, room 3007-S, FSQS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. All comments will be available at the same address during regular business hours.

Farm labor force up seven percent

HARRISBURG — The Labor force on Pennsylvania farms during the survey week of January 6-12, 1980 was estimated at 106,000, an increase of seven percent over the same week in 1979, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Farm family workers remained the same at 83,000 but hired workers numbers jumped 43 percent to 23,000 workers. The Crop Report-

ing Service has accounted for the increase as due mainly to the snowy, rainy and very cold weather during the comparable 1979 survey, which did not allow farmwork to progress as usual.

Farm family workers includes farm operators working on farm one hour or more, plus other family members working 15 hours or more without receiving cash wages during the week.

Hired workers includes all persons working one hour or more for cash wages.

The average workweek for Pennsylvania farm operators was 35.0 hours, 5.1 hours more than during the 1979 survey week. Pennsylvania's hired farm workers averaged 33.8 hours during the week, and other family members working on farms averaged 29.8 hours.

Nationally, the total number of farm workers increased by one percent to 3,021,000 during the survey week.

Pennsylvania farm workers averaged \$3.45 per hour, with field workers receiving \$3.62 per hour and livestock workers receiving \$2.80. The wage rate figures do not take room and board into consideration.

Sale Reports

A Public Sale of farm equipment was held March 6 by Mrs. Elmer B. Zimmerman 1/2 mile south of Lebanon, Lebanon Co., Pa. Registered buyers attending numbered 411.

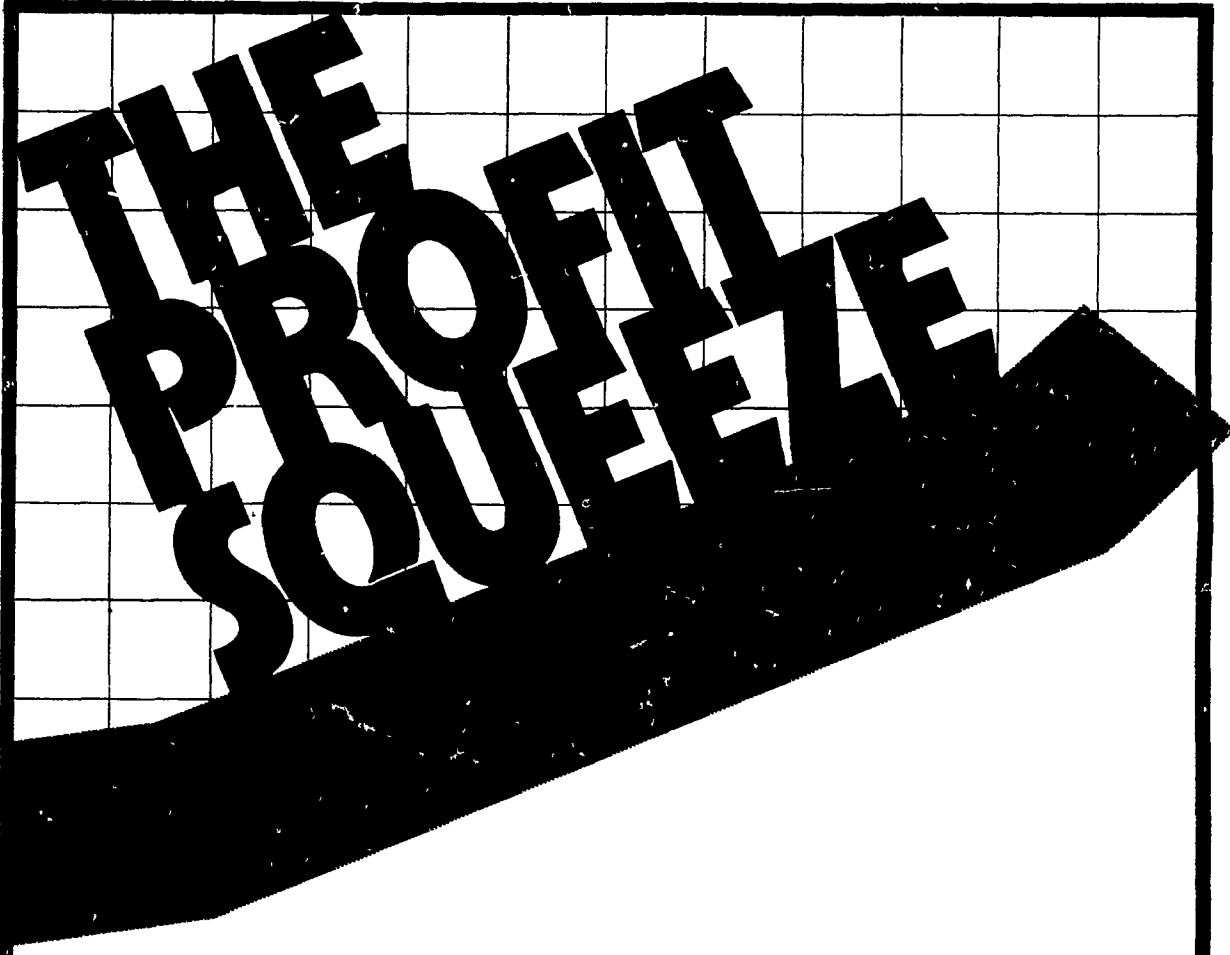
Some prices included: J.D. 4020 Tractor \$12,500, J.D. 400 Tractor w/loader \$8000, J.D. 630 Tractor \$2100, J.D. 300 Riding Mower \$2450, J.D. LA Tractor w/plow \$950, J.D. Transport Disc \$3300, Brillion 9 tooth Chisel Plow \$1200, J.D. 416 Auto. Reset Plow \$1900, Transport Cultipacker \$1050, Gehl Blower \$1100, N.H. 1469 Haybine \$2200, J.D. 38 Harvester \$1950 and Harvester Pickup \$675.

Auctioneers were Nevin Z. Martin and Lewis B. Groff.

A Public Sale of farm machinery was held March 1 by the Amos B. Stauffer Estate, east of Ephrata on Diamond Station Rd., Lancaster Co., Pa.

Items sold were: Papec Forage Wagon on running gear \$1045, Gehl Wagon on running gear \$750, J.D. Tractor \$400, 28' Elevator \$190, Int. Tractor \$360, Corn Planter \$150, 10'x40' Wood Silo \$400, Generator \$400, Walking Plow \$50, Lathe \$195, Tobacco Lathe \$2.10 cwt., Truckbed \$170, 20 Gauge Pump Gun \$205, 2 piles Scrap Iron \$185 & \$215.

Auctioneers were Robert E. Martin & Son and Frank L. Steller.



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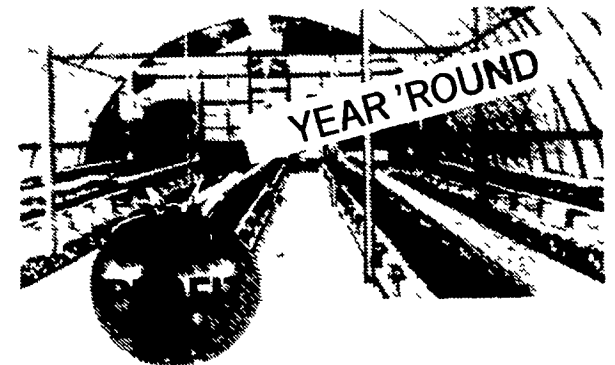
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