

National co-op attorney asks unity, action, cooperation

CENTERVILLE — A united front and some solid political action are required if farmer cooperatives are to continue to serve their members.

That's the feeling of James S. Krzyminski, associate general counsel for the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives in Washington, D.C.

Speaking at the 16th annual meeting of the Atlantic Breeders Cooperative, Krzyminski traced the history of the farm cooperative movement in the United States and told farmers what he feels has to be done to keep co-ops running smoothly.

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives was formed in 1929 by farm co-ops so they could present a united voice. NCFC first was called upon to defend the farm co-op system in World War II when their growing size was pointed out.

Later, the Washington attorney said, small businesses charged the co-ops enjoyed unfair tax advantages.

Today taxes, anti-trust, energy and trade are the prime issues, Krzyminski said.

He said the 1978 amendments to the investment tax credit laws saved \$100 million in taxes to co-ops of

all types the first year it was put into effect.

But, he said, the benefits do not come automatically. He pointed out that legislation such as the Revenue Act of 1962 settled the single tax treatment, but noted that a change in Section 521 of the IRS code is being introduced to change that.

He predicted continued attacks on co-ops, especially in the dairy field where consumer groups and dairy middlemen are coming down on the provisions of the Capper-Volstead Act.

"You can't hope to succeed against such attacks without a favorable political climate," the attorney said.

He said this extends far beyond Congress. The Congress enacts about 3000 laws per year, he said, but 30,000 regulations are promulgated annually by bureaucrats.

While noting the overall government climate with respect to farmer cooperatives is good, he said much of that political support is based on favorable public image.

He predicted doom for farmer co-ops if their base of public support is eroded.

While dairy co-ops presently are the targets of change, he said any co-op could be affected.



James S. Krzyminski, associate general counsel for the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, told farmers that co-ops need to develop better political clout if they are to survive.

"Any exemption from the anti-trust regulations is regarded with suspicion by the bureaucrats," he said.

He said this is because such exemption gives power to the Department of Agriculture and takes it away from the Justice Department or the Federal Trade Commission.

Because of this tender point of public opinion it is necessary for all co-ops to

maintain a good image, he said.

The cooperative movement in general still is suffering from the harm done by the milk fund scandal a few years back, he said.

He noted that farmer co-ops can work in concert with other organizations and said the NCFC has a fine relationship with several diverse groups, even in-

cluding Ralph Nader's people.

He said farmers should build their political power, and said the way to do that was to support a politician's campaign financially.

He made an appeal for individuals and Atlantic Breeders to support the NCFC political action committee.

He encouraged co-op members to bring their directors to Washington and tell the farmer story to the legislators first-hand.

He said farmers should contribute to political candidates. It is the man who gives money to a campaign who will be listened to when the politician is in office, Krzyminski indicated.

He said he saw no problem with larger farmer cooperatives.

He defended the need for

larger co-ops and pointed out that the seven largest farmer co-ops had combined sales less than those of Cargill, one of the firms with which they must compete.

He said cooperatives increase competition when they are big enough to compete with privately owned firms.

He said he had no fear of cooperatives growing to monopoly size so long as they do not abuse their buying or marketing ability. He said the Capper-Volstead Act allowed such growth.

"Farmers' cherished ideas and obvious truths are going to be challenged in the coming years," he said.

Logic, merit, justice, and public feeling must be on the farmer's side so they can obtain the needed political power and carry the battle, Krzyminski concluded.—CH

Lincoln Community Club to meet

LANCASTER — An organizational meeting of the Lincoln Community 4-H Club will be held Monday, March 24 at the home of Elmer Boyd at 7:30 p.m.

Projects available for youth ages 8 through 19

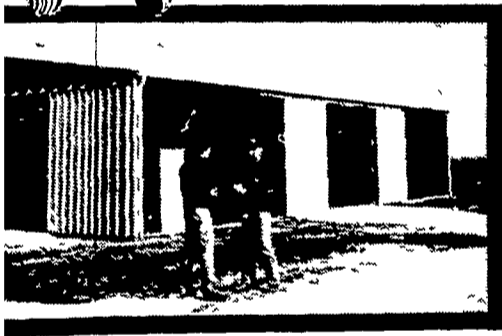
include: swine, capon, strawberries, field corn, and tobacco.

Parents are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact: Elmer Boyd 717/626-4297.

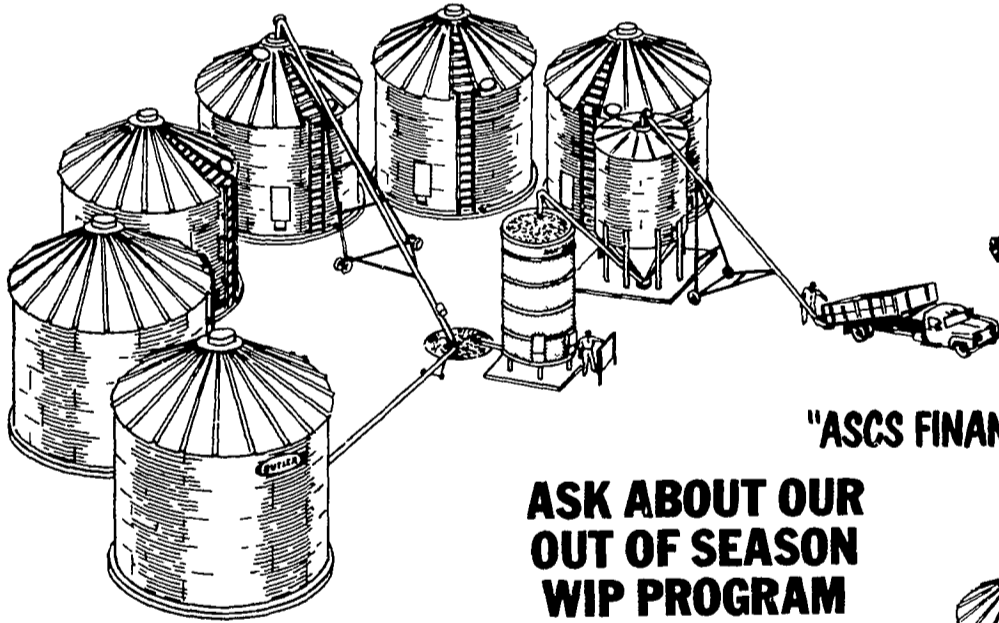
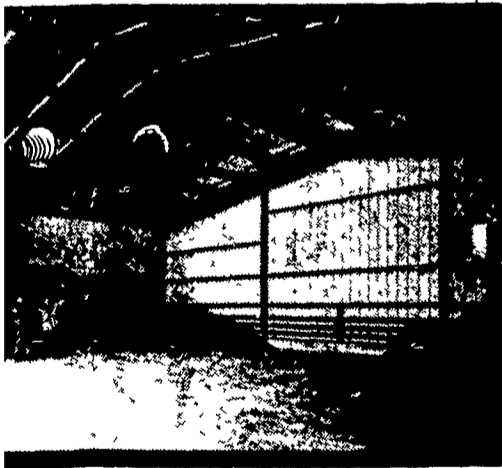
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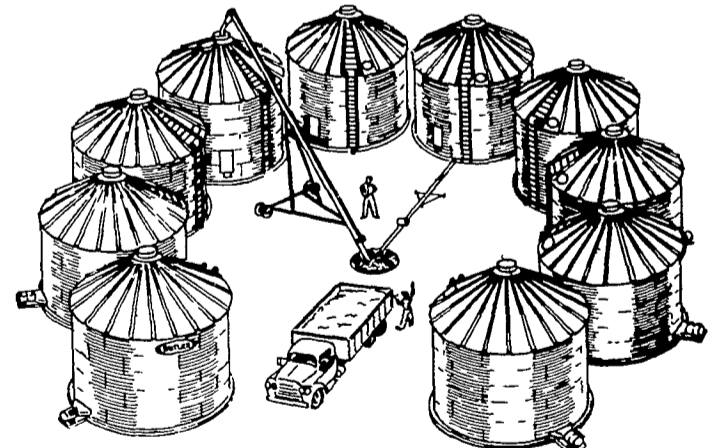
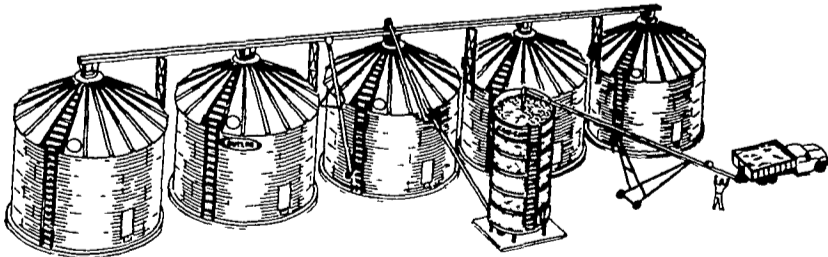


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