

# Grange master asks action on institutional farms

HARRISBURG — Charles Wismer, Master of the Pennsylvania State Grange, called for "some kind of decision to be made" concerning the fate of the institutional farms of the Department of Welfare, in Harrisburg on Tuesday.

"The way the situation stands at present," Wismer said, "the workers will be furloughed at the end of April, and the dispersal sales will commence in mid May."

The decision to sell the equipment and livestock, and to furlough the farm employees, came as a result of the Governor ordering the Department of Welfare to cut their employment rolls

by 1000 workers, earlier this year.

Legislation to transfer the responsibility of the institutional farm's management to the Department of Agriculture was pending in the House at the time.

Because of the tremendous amount of agricultural research being performed at many of the institutional farms, the Grange has been actively seeking to save them through either Executive Order of the Governor's Office, or legislative mandate.

Wismer cited the Young Sire Program as one of the more promising programs

being performed at the farms.

An outstanding example of the success of this program is Harrisburg Gay Ideal, a bull bred by the Harrisburg State Hospital.

Siring over 18,000 daughters in almost 4000 herds, Gay Ideal's daughters' milk production averages 17,599 pounds of milk, and 628 pounds of butterfat at 3.6 percent.

Approximately 6500 of his daughters had an official classification score of 79.3.

Harry Roth, Operations Director of Atlantic Breeders Cooperative, said, "It would be very difficult to assess the economic value to

the dairy industry made by the daughters and sons of this bull, which resulted from the Welfare Herds breeding program in Pennsylvania.

"Over the years," Roth continued, "the state's Welfare Herds have been on a production testing program and contributed very greatly to the Artificial Insemination Sire Sampling and Evaluation Programs."

Praise was tendered by William Nichol, of the Pennsylvania Holstein Association, who stated, "these herds are much more valuable to be kept in their present form than to be dispersed."

"The dairy industry is only one type of agriculture that can benefit from the research being carried on to the institutional farms" Wismer said. "Many other research programs including swine and crop production are in progress."

Much of the freeze branding research in the Commonwealth has been done on institutional farm facilities.

Freeze branding shows a great deal of promise in terms of branding cattle without causing hide damage.

Another series of testing being done is the fat back on pigs program. This research determines what genetic lines produce too much fat on pigs backs.

Litter size is yet another area of research that could be beneficial for the Pennsylvania pork industry.

"A great deal of research is being done on herbicides, pesticides, legumes, and vegetable weed control," the State Grange Master said.

Wismer emphasized that the institutional farms "are not in competition with farmers, but are a benefit to us."

However, if the herds are broken up, the equipment sold, and the laborers furloughed, the farms won't be of any help to anybody."

## Ag Board

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they feel are worth preserving.

First, he said, they identify developed areas. Then they take the Lancaster County Planning Commission's prime agricultural area map and designate the best farmlands.

They look mainly at land with Class I and Class II soils.

A final step is to include farm boundaries so the district does not exclude half of one farm. Unfortunately, the new soil survey was not used for this project. But Heistand said soil scientists he talked to felt there would be few major changes in the general soil classifications.

Heistand mentioned West Hempfield as one township with a logical land use plan with development separated from agriculture.

He questioned Upper Leacock's leaving about half the township's land

available for development when almost all of its valuable soils now are being farmed and as much as 80 to 90 percent of the ground is owned by Amish farmers who show little inclination to develop their holdings.

John Ahlfeld, Lancaster County Planning Commission, noted there is no formal relationship between ag district plans and zoning.

But, he added, the more methods available to control loss of farmland, the better the odds of preserving the land.

The Ag Preservation Board agreed to meet every other Friday for the next several months until they get their programs under way.

The next meeting will be held on Friday, April 25 at 10 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Planning Commission. It is located on the sixth floor of the new courthouse building in Lancaster.

The meeting is open to the public.

## Sign-up for conservation school begins

LANCASTER — The second annual Youth Conservation School, sponsored by the Lancaster County Federation of Sportsman Clubs and the Lancaster County Conservation District will be held August 17-23, 1980 at Camp J. Edward Mack, Brickerville.

"This resident, coeducational school is held to provide instruction in the various areas of conservation, including soil and water conservation, wildlife management, aquatic biology, forestry, survival, or orienteering," said Tom Johnston, Conservation District Administrator and school director. "This school will develop an awareness

for the need to conserve our natural resources and develop the leadership necessary to carry this out."

Instruction will be provided by professionals from the Fish Commission, Game Commission, Department of Environmental Resources, U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service, and others.

Those eligible for the

school should be between 13 and 16 years of age, either boys or girls. Participants must be sponsored by a local sportsman club in their community. If there are no sportsman clubs in your area, contact the Lancaster County Conservation District at 299-5361. Registration deadline is June 1, 1980.

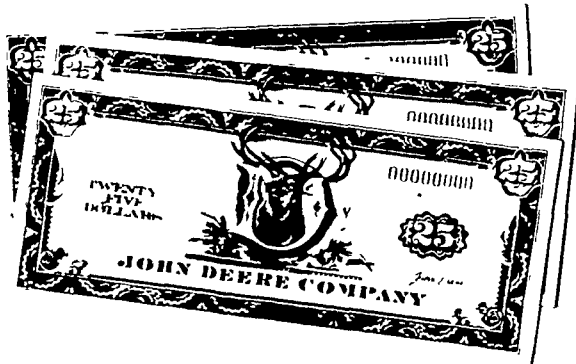
## Barbecue week coming April 24

DES MOINES, Ia — National Pork Producers Council is joining with the Barbecue Industry

Association and Reynolds Metals for a special National Barbecue Week promotion April 24-May 4

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