

Farm fuel supply should meet demand

BY CURT HARLER
HARRISBURG — Farmers in Pennsylvania who have on-farm storage should be able to obtain sufficient gasoline, propane and butane this year to meet all of their farming needs.

But there is no guarantee for any farmer of receiving more than his base period allotment. And there is little provision made to assure adequate supplies of diesel fuel.

There is no diesel base period, no diesel allocation, although no shortage of diesel is anticipated by the government this year.

The provision giving farmers 100 percent of current fuel requirements was abolished because some farmers took all they could get, rather than all they needed.

Despite hardship in past

years, both the U.S. Department of Energy and the Pennsylvania Governor's Energy Council said they foresee no energy shortage either at gas stations or on-farm.

And both DOE and the Commonwealth have ways for farmers to get extra fuel should they run short.

This month Pennsylvania has 102 percent of base fuel allocation. Use, in general, is down. Stockpiles are high, the government agencies said at a meeting held Wednesday by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

The meeting was to assess the farm fuel situation and to determine how any isolated shortage of fuel could be made up.

Farm fuel allocation depends on the "base period allotment" which is the

amount of fuel a farmer used between November 1977 and October 1978. For several years the base period was use in 1972 but the DOE changed the base period last March.

Assurance of base period fuel supplies applies to farmers, food transporters, and food processors. They also may be able to get an allocation for a new storage tank, an allocation not ordinarily made.

The assurance does not apply to veterinarians, AI technicians, and other farm-related servicemen who have purchased fuel at gas stations. They will have to continue to purchase at gas stations.

Neither the state nor the DOE will allow such servicemen to install a tank and

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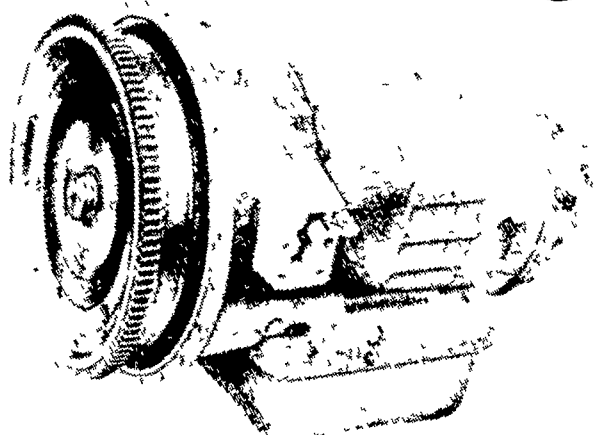


Among the participants in a farm fuel conference Wednesday in Harrisburg were Louise Thompson, U.S. Department of Energy; Cynthia McClain, Governor's Energy Council; Dan Cook, Department of Agriculture; Chester Heim, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; Fred Wertz, research assistant for PDA; and Richard Pennay, ASCS director.

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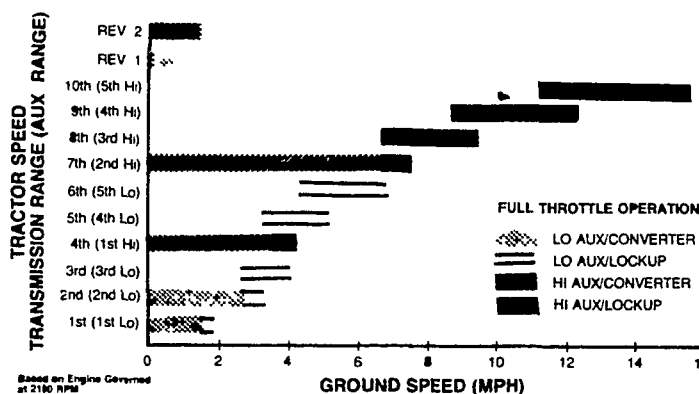
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