

# SCS celebrates 45 years of service

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service marks 45 years of fighting soil erosion and conserving water in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

"Our pioneer environmental agency was created in the desperate days of depression and dust bowl," said SCS chief Norman A. Berg. "The South was gullied, much of the Midwest was washing down

the Mississippi, and the Southwest was blowing away."

Berg added that more than the land was being stripped. "Farmers were being stripped of hope for the future."

Today, the SCS chief said, much of the land has been healed and some form of soil conservation is practiced by most farm producers.

A law establishing the Soil Conservation Service as an agency in USDA was signed April 27, 1935, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was the first soil conservation law enacted by any country in the world.

Dr. Hugh Hammond Bennett, described by Berg as "a fiery apostle of conservation," was named first chief of the Service. Bennett stumped the country speaking to farmers, ranchers and lawmakers about the menace of erosion to the nation's future productivity and the necessity for conservation measures.

So that land users could take the initiative for local conservation programs, one state after another passed laws to allow the creation of

soil conservation districts directed by farmers and other local people. The laws also established state soil and water conservation agencies to help with the task.

SCS, along with other Department of Agriculture agencies, provided the technical conservation help, research and educational and financial assistance.

"The whole face of Agricultural America began to change," Berg recalled. "Stripcropping, contour plowing, and terraces began to replace old timeworn farming systems so destructive to the land."

Overgrazed rangeland began to show improvements. Watersheds were protected. Ponds began to appear, even in the old Dust Bowl. Farmers and ranchers signed up as voluntary conservation cooperators by the hundreds of thousands.

"Today," said Berg, "there are some 2,950 conservation districts in every state and the Caribbean area and more than 2 million land users are cooperators."

"As we search for new and more efficient ways to deliver USDA's soil conservation help today, as directed by the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act, we should never forget that a virtual miracle has taken place on the American landscape

under this voluntary program.

"Billions of tons of soil have been kept on the land and out of our air and rivers, most of the credit goes to the farmers and ranchers who have taken the time and trouble to get the job done."

## Berks PFA women host new media wives

BY LAUREL SCHAEFFER Staff Correspondent

LEESPORT — In acknowledgement of Farm-City Festival Day, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Farmers Association, last week, Berks County Farmers Association Women's Committee hosted a group of news media wives for a day of education and entertainment.

Held at the Berks County Agriculture Center, the women were given an extensive tour of the many departments housed in the agricultural building by James Haldeman, County Extension Service Executive Director.

Haldeman explained that the extension service was first instituted in 1914 as an informal education approach by which new information could be passed from land grant colleges to people at the grass roots level.

It supplies assistance for problems concerning farming, landscaping, nutrition and home economics and is the center of 4-H youth programs throughout the county.

Presently Berks County has 2,500 enrolled 4-H members. Plans are underway for a 4-H center located behind the Agricultural Building. Haldeman toured the ten acre tract of land on which the 4-H center will be located with the women, showing them the completed show rings and sites for the proposed livestock and exhibition buildings.

Also toured were the maintenance areas for county equipment and storage, and offices of the Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, and Soil Conservation Service.

Lunch was held at Lincoln's Restaurant, RD1, Leesport and a craft session was held in the afternoon. Carol Kopfer, R1, Fleetwood, explained how she collects materials and makes arrangements for home decoration. Each person in attendance had the opportunity to make a door decoration from dried flowers, and grain for their own enjoyment.


## Broiler placements increase

HARRISBURG — Placements of broiler chicks in the Commonwealth during the week ending April 26 were 2,475,000, 11 percent above the corresponding week a year ago and seven percent above the previous week, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Average placements during the past nine weeks in Pennsylvania were four percent above a year earlier. In the 21 key poultry producing states,

placements of broiler chicks totaled 82,507,000. This figure is one percent below the previous week and two percent below the same week in 1979. Average placements in the 21 states during the past nine weeks were two percent above a year ago.

Broiler fryers slaughtered in Pennsylvania under federal inspection during the week ending April 16 totaled 2,151,000, with an average liveweight of 4.09 pounds.



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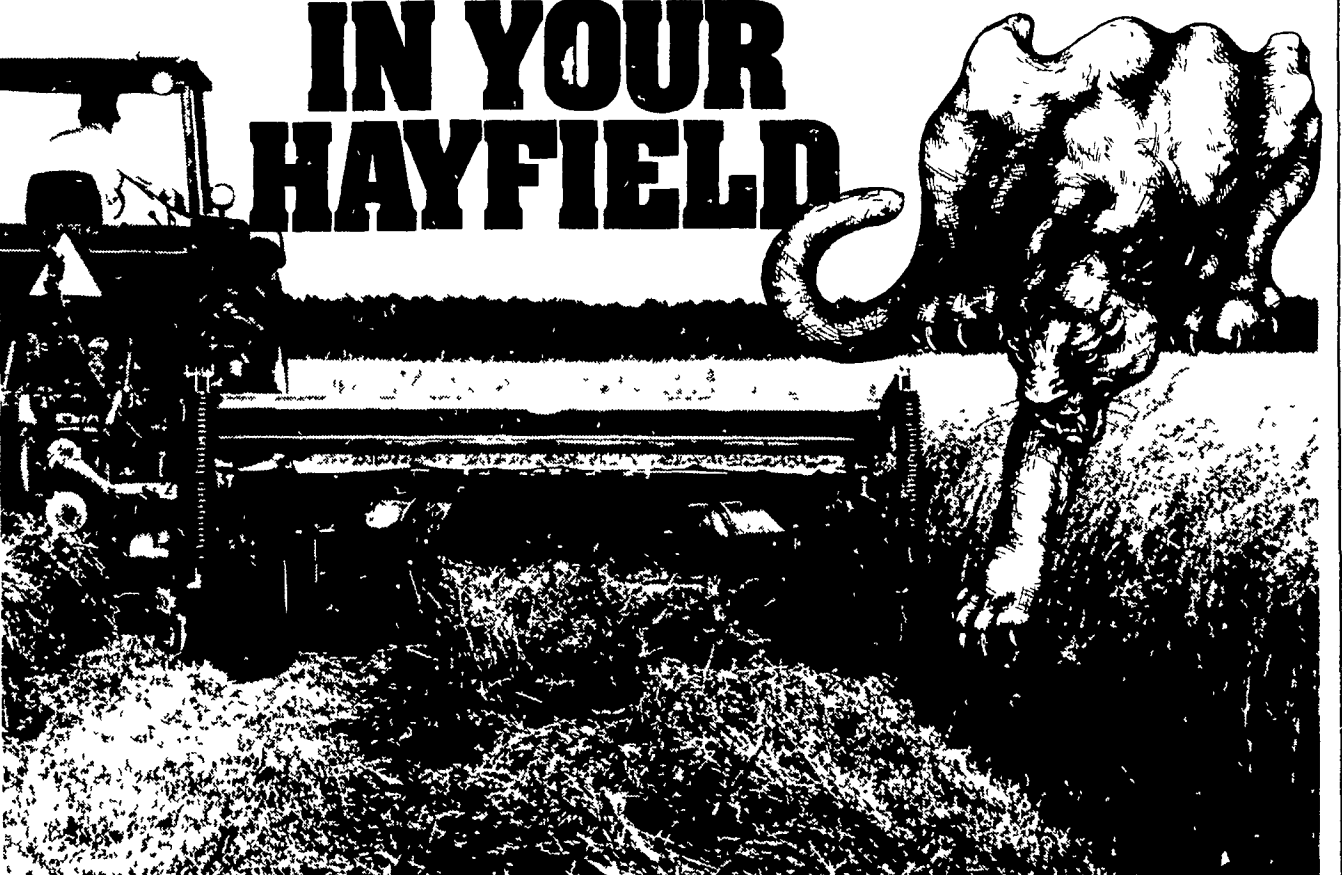


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