

Ag district bill passes 177 to 5

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania House this week passed HB 1793, the ag district bill, by a vote of 177 to 5.

The bill gives counties the

authority to purchase development rights. The few negative votes cast by Pittsburgh area legislators were overwhelmingly overridden by lawmakers from other areas of the state.

The bill now will move to the Senate for further consideration.

Representative Noah Wenger, vice chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, said he was

optimistic about the bill's future in the upper chamber.

The only problem he saw with the bill's smooth passage there is if an amendment is added. Because the end of the

current legislative session is near there may not be time for the bill to come back through the House for concurrence if an amendment is added.

Another important piece of agricultural legislation in the Senate is HB 1794, the right to farm bill.

Introduced by Wenger on behalf of the mushroom industry and strongly supported by the Pennsylvania Poultry Federation, the bill was amended to include food processors as well as farmers in its provisions.

HB 1794 would make it illegal for any local municipality to pass a nuisance ordinance such as on banning standard farming practices.

Things like lime dust and typical farm odors are included under the bill's protection.

The senate concurred 47 to 0 on SB 985 and SB 986, the Knapp bills, which would prevent school boards and other municipal bodies from land speculation.

It now goes to the house for concurrence with amendments added. Pittsburgh legislators may raise some last second opposition to those bills, as they want Class I school districts excluded. They have missed many previous opportunities to get such an exclusion written in.

HB 2406 is a new noxious weed bill which applies only to Johnsongrass. It is moving in place of the old bill which would have allowed new species to be declared noxious at times in the future.

The old bill drew fire because it would have included multiflora rose as a noxious weed. That measure was opposed by rose growers and the Pennsylvania Game Commission which, in the past, has urged its planting as a game cover.

HB 2406, the eminent domain bill which is supported by the State Grange, passed with 67 votes against. It now moves to the senate where some opposition may be encountered.—CH

Lehigh ag teacher is state winner

SCHNECKSVILLE — Stephen Ragosta, vocational agriculture teacher at Lehigh County Vo-Tech school at Schnecksville has been named state winner of the 1980 National Vocational Teachers Assoc.-John Deere "Outstanding Young Member" award for Pennsylvania.

The award is sponsored annually by John Deere, Moine, Illinois in cooperation with NVATA,

Alexandria, Virginia. The NVATA is a national professional organization serving more than 10,000 vocational educators in agriculture throughout the United States. Members include elementary, secondary and post-secondary teachers, state supervisors of agricultural education, teacher educators at colleges/universities, and college

students majoring in agricultural education.

Vocational agriculture education is continually faced with a shortage of qualified teachers. Unless more young teachers remain in the profession for a longer period of time, the teacher shortage will continue.

The award is designed to encourage younger teachers to become more involved in activities that induce longer tenure. It recognizes those who have taught three, but not more than five years and have assumed an active role in professional leadership, have been active in community activities, and have implemented innovations to meet the needs of the local

vocational agriculture students.

Membership and participation in professional, civic, community and farm organizations and the accomplishments of students in various areas of the Future Farmers of America and/or the National Post-secondary Agriculture Student Organizations are criteria for selecting winners.

The "Outstanding Young Member" award applications of state winners will be evaluated by special NVATA Selection Committee June 15. Six regional winners will be named. The regional winners will be announced July 1.

Harold Weik wins Lebanon strawberry contest

LEBANON — The Lebanon Kiwanis Club again sponsored the County FFA Strawberry Contest. The contest was held at the Lebanon Treadway Inn.

FFA contestants each brought six boxes of their best project strawberries to be judged. They were judged on uniformity, size, color, and shape. Dennis Hoke, county extension agent, was the official judge for the event. After the berries were judged, Harry Bachman, a Lebanon County auctioneer, auctioned the strawberries to members of the Kiwanis. The top box sold for \$110.

The results of the contest were as follows: 1. Harold Weik - Cedar Crest FFA; 2. Mike Grill - Northern

Lebanon FFA; 3. Mike Geesaman - Northern Lebanon FFA, and 4. Brian Blatt, Northern Lebanon FFA.

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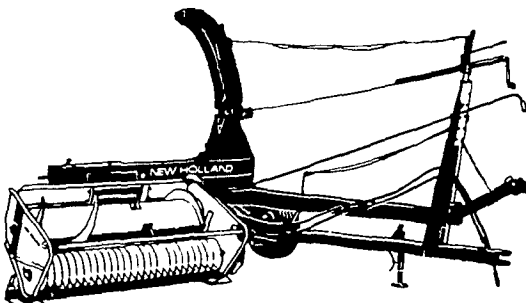
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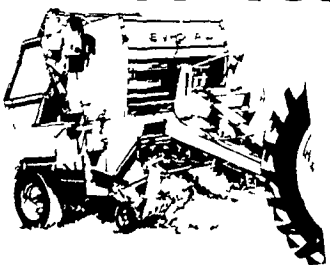
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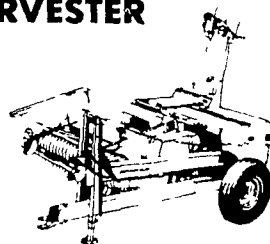


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