

Representative explains ag preservation measure

HARRISBURG — A new approach to the preservation of agricultural land has been passed by the state House. Rep. Noah Wenger, co-sponsor of the measure, said

House Bill 1793 would permit local government to create special agricultural areas in order to protect prime farmland from being zoned or developed out of

existence.

The Vice Chairman of the Agriculture Committee said the measure also provides for an Agricultural Area Advisory Committee and establishes a system for the formation of an agriculture area.

Wenger said once an agricultural area is established, it would be subject to the following conditions:

Development easements The county could set up a program to purchase development easements from owners of land within the agricultural areas. Since the bill is voluntary, landowners would not be forced to sell such an easement to the county

Local ordinances. Local governments would be prohibited from adopting ordinances which unreasonably restrict farm structures or agricultural practices. Exceptions would

be made for regulations directly affecting public health or safety.

Eminent domain. State agencies and local governments with the power of eminent domain could not condemn land located within an agricultural area without

the approval of certain agencies.

Wenger added the continued existence of an agricultural area would come up for review every eight years. Review procedures would include recommendations from the

planning commission and the advisory committee in addition to a public meeting.

"This is a vital piece of legislation for Pennsylvania. This innovative method of dealing with land use will be a benefit to future generations," he concluded.

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Local firemen (Continued from Page B8)

Penn State ag engineers and safety specialists.

Nowhere else in the country is a farm safety program much more developed than the two-year old course offered in Pennsylvania.

But the information is reaching those who need to

learn about sophisticated, complex farm equipment At last year's seminar only two of the 84 men who participated in the sessions had any background in farm equipment.

This year's class had a larger percentage of farm-experienced members. But

the practice, several said, was quite worthwhile.

Members of the Salunga, Mastersonville, Elizabethtown-Mt. Joy Forest Fire Crew, East Petersburg, Bainbridge, and Silver Springs fire companies were among those who attended the session this year.



Ken Messick explains the operation of PTO driven haying equipment to a group of volunteer firemen. The rescue crews also were able to familiarize themselves with other typical pieces of farm equipment in case they should be called on to remove an accident victim.

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