

Legislative roundup

Farm nuisance bill may cover processors, too

BY CURT HARLER
HARRISBURG — Support continues to grow to include food processors under the provisions of the farm nuisance ordinance protection bill, HB 1794.

That bill, which passed the Pennsylvania House before the summer recess and now is in the State Senate, would protect farms from ordinances interfering with normal farming practices.

Such things as manure odors, dust from lime, and noise from lambs could not be outlawed by any local municipality should HB 1794 become law.

A new version of the bill would broaden the definition of agricultural operation to include "any agricultural endeavor that uses land for the production and/or processing of any and all plant and animal products which are produced or processed for commercial purposes."

The change has the support of the Pennsylvania

Grange, Pennsylvania Farmers' Union and the State Food Processors Association.

The change, included in the new printer's number 3487, does not extend unlimited coverage to all processors.

Rocco Pugliese, who represents the Pennsylvania Food Processors, noted the amendment would apply only to a few of the state's processors, and then to only some of the crops they process.

Pugliese, who represent fruit, vegetable, and mushroom processors, said the amendment is based primarily upon principle.

He said agriculture is not 100 percent growers but includes processors. He noted that any erosion in farmers' marketing outlets would see the growers undone.

He pointed out the difficulties experienced by 160 growers in the Milton area

when American Home Foods left the area. Most of those growers were picked up by other processors.

The amendment to HB 1794 limits protection under the amendment to those plants which have their own agricultural operation and produce 51 percent of that commodity on their farm.

Knouse Foods, a fruit processing co-op in Adams County, would be one of those to reap broadest benefits since its members produce most of what is processed there. Other processors like Furman's or Charles Summers, Inc., also would benefit on a limited number of crops.

Support for HB 1794, and for the amendment covering processors, is being talked up through the House and Senate halls, as well as to Administration leadership.

The basic goal is to provide smooth sailing for the measure when the state legislature reads to act on it a month from now.

Wayne Jr. Livestock sale coming

HONESDALE — The 4th Annual Wayne County Junior Livestock Sale will be held on Saturday, August 9 at 7 p.m., here at the Fair Grounds.

Local 4-H and FFA members will be selling their prize project animals. There will be approximately 20 steers, 50 market hogs, and 40 market lambs run across the auction block.

Absentee bids can be sent through local 4-H leaders or the County Extension Service. Transportation and processing arrangements can be requested.

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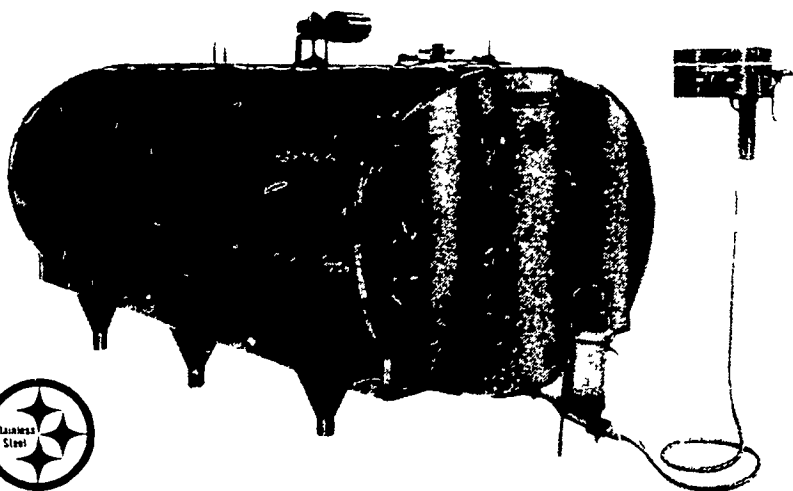
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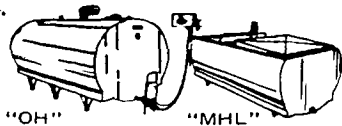
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