

Wenger sees expansion of direct farmer-consumer marketing

READING — State Rep. Noah W. Wenger, of Stevens, Lancaster County, recently told the Farmer to Consumer Services Association that he expects to see expansion in direct farmer-consumer marketing.

Wenger, speaking at the annual dinner of the Association in Reading said, "Farmers have been forced into trying new and innovative marketing approaches in an attempt to remain solvent. Direct farmer to consumer marketing usually allows producers to pocket a larger share of the food dollar, and while it brings its own set of problems, it has been successful for some farmers."

Wenger spoke about the importance of agriculture to Pennsylvania, calling it "the bright spot in our present



Noah Wenger

economy, even with this year's drought." He said "Pennsylvania Agriculture - We're Growing Better is a reality I intend to fully support Pennsylvania

agriculture as it works to become the state's leading industry in 1981. We have the opportunity to expand agriculture in Pennsylvania to satisfy the demand for food in the northeast and in foreign markets. The existence of this local source of food is important to all Pennsylvanians as a buffer against increased costs of transportation, energy and crop failures in other regions of the nation. We are fortunate that Pennsylvania agriculture growing better."

Wenger, vice chairman of the State House Committee on Agriculture and Rural Affairs told farmers at the dinner, "Government must work with, encourage and compliment individual initiative in the free enterprise system—helping people help themselves."

Following Representative Wenger's talk, Association President Richard Solly, of Solly Brothers' Farm Market in Ivyland, Bucks County, announced the nomination of two new members to seats on the board of directors.

Nominated were Donald Haldeman, owner of Sycamore Springs Fruit and Vegetable Farm in Leesport, Berks County; and Byron Hawthorne, owner of the Hawthorne Farm and Orchard Market in Phoenixville, Chester County.

Solly also noted at the annual dinner meeting that funding for the Association has been extended to June 30, 1981 and hopefully will be extended to the end of the next growing season, toward the goal of being self-sufficient.

Most country crime goes unreported

LANCASTER — Country crime is worse than law enforcement statistics reveal because of "massive underreporting" of the crimes.

A study just completed of four Missouri counties showed nearly one-fourth of the households sampled had been crime victims during the year preceding the study. Some 15 percent of the 411 households surveyed had experienced theft; eight percent vandalism.

Of those victimized by theft only 37 percent reported the thefts.

According to the University of Missouri-Columbia scientists who conducted the study, underreporting of rural crime appears to be a national problem. In 1978, for example, the FBI Uniform Crime Index reported only one out of every 92 Missouri residents was a victim of serious crime. Yet, the UMC study would indicate a crime

rate at least ten times as high.

The FBI index included robbery, assault, burglary, theft, rape and murder, but did not include vandalism.

While the exclusion of vandalism explains part of the differences between the FBI index and the recent Missouri findings, said the scientists, it's still quite evident that many crimes go unreported for fear of reprisal or for some other reason.

The study was conducted by the UMC Departments of Community Development, Sociology and Rural Sociology in Holt County (northwest Missouri), Knox County (northeast), Morgan County (south central) and Stoddard County (southeast Missouri). Morgan County was selected because it's in the Lake of the Ozarks region and would indicate if there's any effect of owner absenteeism on crime rate.

"We found no difference in

crime rate from one area to the other," said Bryan Phifer, director of UMC's Community and Public Sector Programs.

"Also, we found no direct correlation between crime rates in open country households and small town households within the same county. The best example was in Bloomfield.

It had the lowest rate of victimization among the small towns—even though it's in Stoddard County which had the highest rate of open country victimization."

Phifer and his colleagues said the open country residents who have been victims of crime "are surprisingly no more likely to take precautions to prevent crime than those open

country residents who have not been victims."

In their report, "Rural Crime in Missouri," the scientists said: "Clearly these patterns of infrequent reporting and neglect of precautions suggest the need for citizen education programs."

They went on to say that one of the most effective measures to combat crime in both urban and rural areas is the organization of "neighborhood crime watches."

Other effective measures for reducing crime, said the scientists, were reporting of suspicious and criminal activity to law enforcement officials and marking property.

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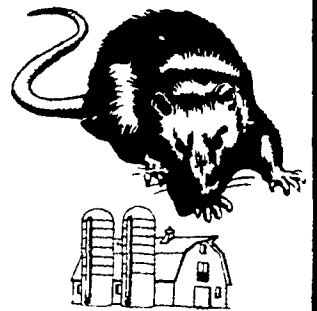
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