

Farm groups oppose strings on Clean and Green tax law

BY CURT HARLER

HARRISBURG — Plans to attach strings to the Clean and Green tax break, often allowed by Act 319's preferential ag tax assessment, have met opposition from state farm groups and other organizations.

At a Wednesday hearing, farm groups reacted strongly against methods used to attach regulations to Act 319 which the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has proposed.

On Thursday afternoon the Secretary of Agriculture announced he would form an advisory committee to review the regulations as submitted and look especially at Section 137.10C.

The Secretary said he will solicit nominees from county commissioners whose job it is to administer Act 319's provisions, as well as from farm groups.

Among other things, the

new rules would require an approved forestry management plan in order to receive Clean and Green tax treatment for forest reserves. They also would require land in an ag preserve be 60 percent in soil use classes I to VI.

Both the State Grange and Pennsylvania Farmers' Association said they believe the Department's proposal 137.10C to require a management plan goes beyond the authority granted the Department by the legislature in Act 319.

Neither opposed the Department's general concept, but both were strongly against the methods to implement the program.

Farm groups did praise the simplified language of the measure.

The Department is under no mandate to change the proposal. If changes are to be made, another hearing will have to be held.

The Department wants the regulations adopted before the July 1, 1981 sign-up deadline for this year's Clean and Green program. Those currently in the program will not have to comply if the new regulations are enacted.

PFA said it believes the proposals exceed authority granted the Department under Act 319 and could pave the way for more Clean and Green restrictions such as mandatory conservation plans for farm land.

In testifying for PFA at a hearing on Wednesday, Leonard Crooke, a Bucks County dairyman, came down hard on the proposed forest land regulation.

Crooke told the hearing PFA policy states "government regulatory functions should be based on law."

He added that PFA feels Acts 319 and 515 should be

implemented and administered without the imposition of penalties not provided by the statutes themselves.

"It is our belief that this exceeds the authority granted under the Act," Crooke said.

"As such, the requirement of a forest management plan for eligibility for forest reserve and the penalties for non-compliance with that plan, must be opposed by PFA," he said.

The PFA representative said the regulations were an innovative move, but said the group was "gravely concerned" by an apparent move to broaden the Act to something other than one granting preferential assessment.

The Pennsylvania Grange, while saying they support the concept of requiring a management plan, opposed regulation as the method to

obtain that end. They said they preferred to see the Department go through legislative channels.

They also said they would like to see the definition broadened to include both Bureau of Forestry and ASCS timber stand improvement as satisfactory to meet Clean and Green requirements.

Grangers, represented by Public Relations Director David Weinstock, also asked the minimum acreage go from 10 to 25 acres.

What the Grange liked least was the idea that the Department was trying to enforce the measures by bypassing the legislative process.

Both PFA and the Grange agreed the proposals go beyond the original intent of the legislators who drew up Act 319, the enabling legislation for Clean and Green.

But Weinstock said that while the Grange opposes the regulatory route, they would support the Department if it tried to institute the requirements legislatively.

The two major farm groups were joined in their opposition by members of the Pennsylvania Forestry Association, the state Sportsmen's Association, the Hardwood Association, and representatives of timber interests in Pennsylvania.

The lumber representatives, citing the legal requirement to treat all parties equally, said any proposal to require forest land to have a conservation plan should be joined by a similar plan covering cultivated farm land.

The committee to look into the groups' objections should be formed within the next 30 days.

Six Del. 4-H'ers win national honors

CHICAGO — Six Delaware 4-H members received national recognition for their projects at the National 4-H Congress, November 29-December 4. They are Chris Kittila, Valerie Moore, Tami Gundry, Steve Majchrzak, Debbie Stradley and Jon B. Harcum.

Chris Kittila, of Seaford, son of Mr. and Mrs. Allan B. Kittila, won a \$1000 scholarship sponsored by Eastman Kodak for his photography project. Chris is a member of the Seaford Blue Jays 4-H Club.

Valerie Moore, a member of the Porter Gang 4-H Club, was awarded a \$1000 scholarship for her health project by Kraft, Inc. and Eli Lilly. Valerie is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Irwin C. Moore, of Bear.

In the field of foods and nutrition, Tami Gundry was awarded a \$1000 scholarship by the General Foods Cor-

poration. Tami, the daughter of Blanche and John Gundry, Seaford, is a member of the State Line 4-H Club.

Steve Majchrzak, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dennard R. Hill, Seaford, won a \$1000 scholarship award for his 4-H swine project. This award was sponsored by Wilson Foods Corporation. Steve belongs to Sandy Field 4-H Club.

Jon Harcum and Debbie Stradley were named national alternates. Jon, a University of Delaware agricultural engineering student from Laurel, was recognized for his automotive project. The son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Harcum, he is a member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club.

Debbie, daughter of David and Margie Stradley, Middletown, won recognition for her breads projects. She is a member of the Ever Ready 4-H Club.

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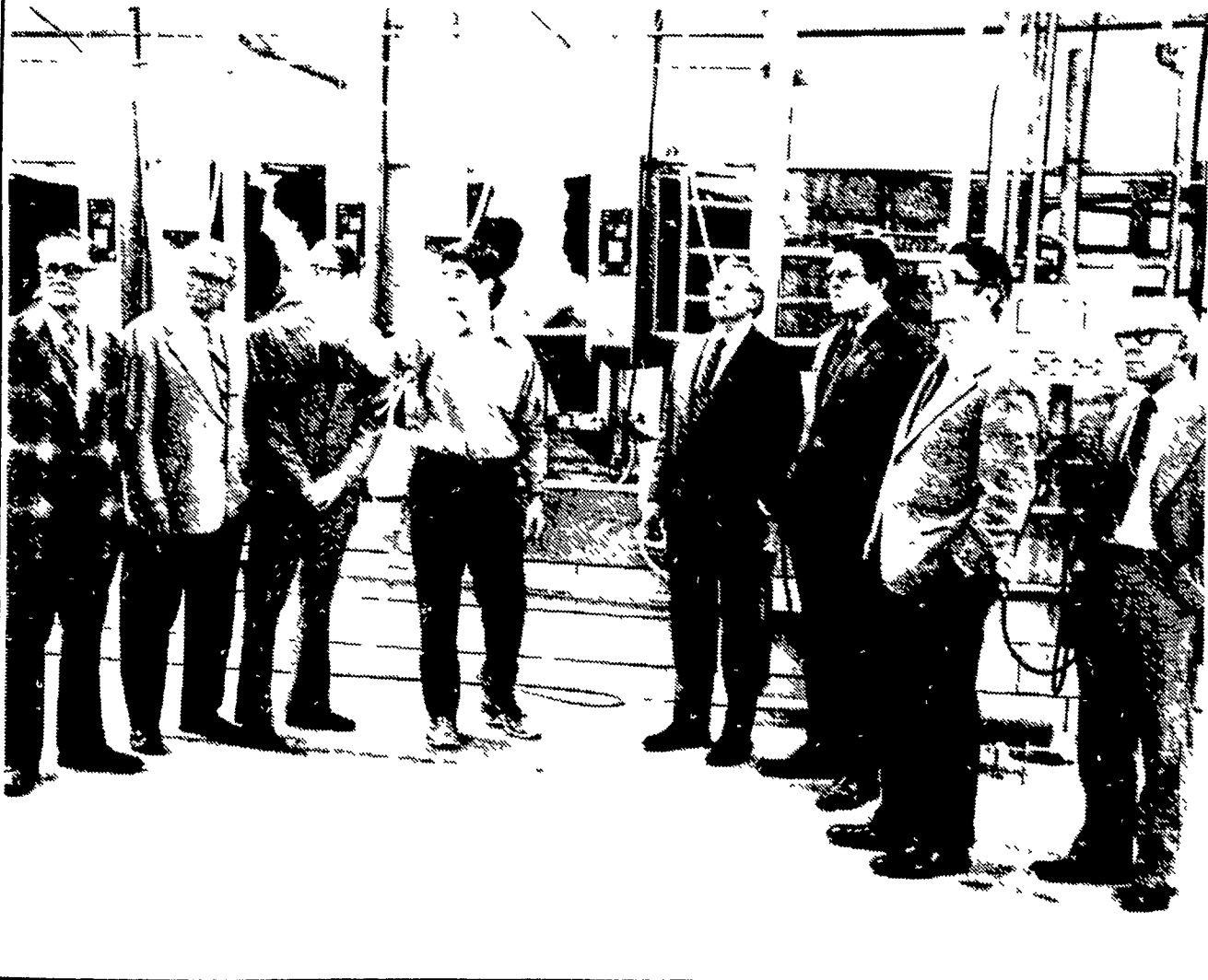
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Hickory Hill Farms, Inc. at Upperco, Maryland. Wayne L. Armacost (center), dairy specialist and one of the principals of Hickory Hill Farms, Inc. is pictured in the 24 stall polygon milking parlor describing the operational features including automatic delatchers, electronic weighing device and computer production recorder to Members of the Hanover Advisory Board of Hamilton Bank (left to right): A. S. Kuhn, W. J. Geiselman, C. D. Weber, Paul E. Spears, also Member of the Board of Directors - Hamilton Bank, N. T. Washburn, Chairman of the Hanover Advisory Board and Member of the Board of Directors - Hamilton Bank, E. M. Buchen, and H. E. Markle.



SPECIAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING SPONSORED BY EASTERN MILK PRODUCERS

WHEN: 8:00 P.M., Monday, December 15, 1980
WHERE: Mt. View High School, Route 106, Kingsley, PA

WHO'S INVITED: Everyone

Come One - Come All

The CNI proposal to remove reconstituted fluid milk products from Class I pricing under all Federal milk orders has been resurrected. The future of the Federal milk order program and the livelihoods of all dairy farmers are at stake.

Eastern's economist and a representative from the New York - New Jersey Milk Market Administrator's office will be present to speak on this critical issue.

All dairy farmers are urged to attend. Non-members are welcome.



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