

# 'Reagriculture' projects begin in 10 counties

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

(Writer's note: Just as with the nation's economics, the new policies of the Reagan Administration are shaping farm programs for now and many years to come. And just as the word "Reaganomics" has been coined, perhaps the new ag programs can be called "Reagriculture.")

**LANCASTER** — "Reagriculture" programs, in which beginning farmers are being paired with older experienced farmers in a pilot project that features no new costs to the federal government, are under way in 10 Pennsylvania counties.

The 10 Pennsylvania counties are among 81 counties across the nation in which the pilot project is being tried under the USDA, which announced the program last October as an effort to help part-time and beginning farmers become full-time and successful.

A check with Farmers Home

Administration county supervisors, who are coordinating the pilot projects, this week showed that the Family Farmer Development Committees have been created in each of the counties and their work is progressing toward the selection of young farmer candidates and their older, more experienced counselors.

Committee chairmen in the 10 Pennsylvania counties participating in the pilot project include:

Lancaster — Donald L. Hershey, R6, Manheim.

Berks — Donald Lutz, R1, Mohrsville.

Bradford — Leigh Sturdevant, R1, Jillett.

Centre — Jack Decker, Centre Hall.

Columbia — Marvin Snyder, R1, Dornsife (committee member.)

Crawford — James Andrew, R1, Espyville, and Donald Closky, R2, Cambridge Springs, co-chairmen.

Franklin — James Wilson,

Mercersburg, committee member. Huntingdon — Harold Dean, RD, Hesston, and Herman Espy, Spruce Creek.

Somerset — Paul Countryman, R1, Berlin.

York — William Fleet, Dover.

Organization of the committees generally have taken place in meetings held within the past few weeks.

Now that the committees are in place, they are moving on to interviewing and selecting beginning or part-time farmers and a cadre of counselors and then pairing the two as a feature of the program.

These knowledgeable active and retired farmers and retired management experts will then counsel program participants in annual and long-range plans for their ag operations.

In a news release announcing the program on Oct. 23, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block emphasized that no new funds or programs would be required for the project.

"Rather, we will bring together in a coordinated effort, local representatives of the public and private sectors who will volunteer to help the family farmers plan for successful operations," Block said.

Patrick Freeman, FmHA supervisor in Lancaster County, echoed the assessment of many of the other county supervisors concerning the progress of the pilot projects.

"Because it's a new program," Freeman said, "we plan to move carefully."

Richard Lehman, FmHA supervisor in Somerset, said:

"We're just taking it step by step and it seems to be working."

Many of the county supervisors reported that already tentative lists of possible young farmer candidates and counselors have been compiled.

Other states in which the pilot projects are being conducted include Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon and Texas.

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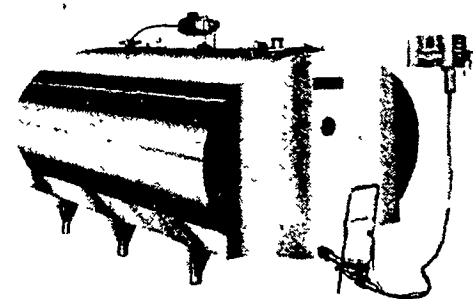
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