

Lancaster Farming

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\$7.50 per year

Axe falls on PA potato budget

BY DONNA TOMMELLEO
STATE COLLEGE — Faced with federal budget cuts of at least \$75,000 a year, more than 300 Pennsylvania potato growers will vote this spring on doubling their penny per hundredweight assessment to save the 5-year-old Potato Research Program.

The referendum was announced Wednesday, during the 31st Annual Pennsylvania Potato Growers Institute in State College. If passed, the program would

generate \$60,000 annually as compared with a previous \$30,000. "We are flat broke," remarked research director and plant pathologist David MacKenzie.

MacKenzie heads the Potato Seed Farm at Black Moshannon, which is funded by growers' assessments, potato chip companies, agrichemical companies and federal and state grants. The farm was built to produce elite potato seed and varieties that would help state growers compete in a highly competitive national industry.

The plant pathologist explained that national competition contributed to the current financial

woes of the Commonwealth's industry.

The Pacific Northwest (Idaho, Washington, Oregon, etc.) has more "political clout," said MacKenzie, who has lobbied for funds for Pennsylvania, only to walk away empty-handed.

"Washington, D.C. has dried up as a source of funds," he noted. MacKenzie said he also had requested state funds, generated from harness racing, but was turned down.

"Agriculture research has the

lowest priority. I was told there would be no fair funds for new ag grants," MacKenzie reported.

As a result, MacKenzie explained that stripping the research farm to the bare operating minimum was necessary.

"We'll make it through planting and we'll make it through June," he said. "The question is, at what level will we operate?"

"We perform magic, but we're not up to miracles." However, MacKenzie assured growers that the farm would not be shut down.

Research advisory board supervisor Ray Reiter reported that State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell has reviewed the growers request for a two cent assessment and has agreed to conduct a special referendum.

Hallowell recently informed growers by mail of the upcoming referendum and has set a public hearing for Tuesday, March 23, 1:30 p.m. at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in Harrisburg.

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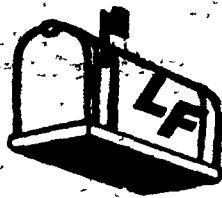
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Jeff Martin, Cloister FFA Chapter, and a team from the Grassland Chapter are the top scorers in Poultry Judging Competition in one of the largest competitions in recent years...B16.

"Ag secretaries agree to lead 'Agriculture Day'"

LANCASTER — Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block and PA Ag Secretary Penrose Hallowell, both agreed this week to serve, respectively, as national and state honorary chairmen for Agriculture Day 1982, scheduled to take place March 18.

Initiated originally in 1973 as national "Agriculture Day," the program is dedicated to celebrating the "successes of U.S. agriculture in providing the world's most abundant and highest quality food supply," according to the state Department of Agriculture.

Senators Jesse Helms and Walter Huddleston, with the support of 36 senators, introduced a resolution proclaiming the day a national ag day recently. The resolution requests the President to issue a proclamation encouraging Americans to participate in ceremonies and activities honoring one of the nation's most important industries.

In introducing the resolution, Helms said, "The United States Congress can pay a fitting tribute to American farmers and ranchers by adopting this resolution. In view of the tremendous accomplishments and contributions that American farmers make to the national and world economies, it is appropriate to recognize American agriculture in this manner."

On the state level, Hallowell said, "Agriculture is truly Pennsylvania's heartbeat, providing an abundance of food at reasonable prices, a stable source of jobs and a standard of living of which we can all be proud. Agriculture Day is a nationwide effort to tell the public just how important agriculture is in their daily lives."

Lancaster Farming will be recognizing this eminent day, designated this year as "Agriculture: It's Your Heartbeat America," in a future issue.—DK

Lancaster County Dairy Days

Is more feed-vet cooperation needed?

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN
LANCASTER — Is more cooperation needed between feed company representatives and veterinarians on today's dairy farms?

It would seem so, according to comments from a panel of three vets that were on the Lancaster County Dairy Days program this week.

A consensus of opinion among the vet panel, which included Drs. Christopher Barton, Salunga; David Bayer, Quarryville; and Harley Kooker, Gap, was that vets and feedmen at times give different recommendations and there should be more cooperation among the two and the dairy operators they serve.

In other matters covered during

the varied two-day program, these additional observations came to light:

—John's disease is becoming an increasing problem in dairy herds and a concentrated statewide effort may be needed to eradicate the disease.

—With the apparent continuing trend to larger dairy operations, these big operators still may have something to learn from successful smaller farmers.

—The differing sides in the milk referendum debate are pretty well polarized and there are no new changes in positions.

—Easy credit policies and lower interest rates of the past may be part of the financial problems that agriculture now faces.

The vet panel led off the Tuesday

portion of the program, following the Farm Bureau film on animal welfare.

"Feedmen and vets don't seem to talk much together," Dr. Bayer said.

Dr. Barton gave the opinion that the conflict between the feed industry and veterinarians may be due to each party working on a different economic basis.

"Veterinarians are working for the dairyman and we may see ways to more economically produce milk that is in conflict with the feedman," Dr. Barton said.

Dr. Kooker echoed the feelings of his colleagues that more cooperation is needed and perhaps

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Past leader receives praise as New PHA president takes the reins



Marion Alsdorf, right, became new president and devoted service on outgoing president, John Cope. See additional pictures and highlights of the convention on page D2. Here he places a pin for two years of hard work.