

# E-town couple commits farm to ag preservation

**ELIZABETHTOWN** — "Whereas, Lancaster County has declared that preservation of prime agricultural land is vital to the public interest and advances the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the county..."

So proclaimed the words of the second deed in the Red Rose County which permanently restricts the use of an E-Town farm solely to agriculture purposes.

For farm owners George and Patricia Baum, Monday's deed-signing culminated many years of discussion.

"We had talked about this for quite awhile," said Patricia. "We felt strongly that we should do it because it must be done."

The Baums, who purchased the land in 1964 maintain a 35-head milking herd. They inked their

commitment, Monday, in front of several county commissioners and County Agriculture Preserve Board members.

"You're setting a fine example for others," offered Commissioner Jim Huber.

"We certainly appreciate the steps you have taken," added Commissioner Jean Mowery.

According to Preserve Board member Amos Funk, the Baum's decision already has added to the "snowball" which began when Ephrata landowners Ivan and Fannie Martin signed the county's first deed restriction, last month. Since then, Funk has been busy explaining the opportunity to interested groups and individuals.

Because of their commitment, the Baums are eligible for a tax break but waived the opportunity.

"We didn't know about a tax advantage until a couple weeks



Following the signing of the Baum's deed, George and Patricia (third and fourth from left) are flanked by a group of Lancaster County well-wishers on the lawn of the Baum's 98-acre farm. From left the group includes: Robert Rorer, chairman of the County

Commissioners; Jim Huber, County Commissioner; the Baums; Jean Mowery, County Commissioner; and Agriculture Preserve Board members Aaron Stauffer and Amos Funk.



Ag Preserve Board solicitor Jim Thomas, right, reviews the county's second deed restriction with Elizabethtown couple George and Patricia Baum.

ago," said Patricia. "But that had nothing to do with our decision."

According to a recent report from the county Planning Commission, four additional townships' requests for agricultural preservation grants have been approved by the Commission.

The grants are being provided from a total of \$50,000 in community Development Program funds made available for townships to undertake any kind of

agricultural preservation planning.

To date, \$48,000 has been awarded, all of it for use in establishing or strengthening agricultural zoning districts. Four townships which recently received approval of grant requests are: East Hempfield, \$6,000; Little Britain, \$3,200; Providence, \$1,550; and Rapho, \$3,500.

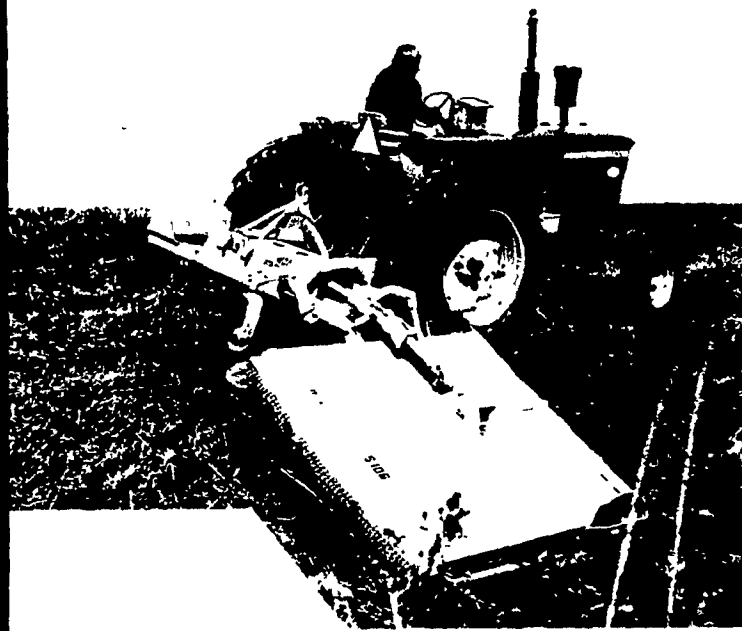
Before the contingent of well-wishers left the Baum household,

Patricia glanced over at a photo of her two-month-old grandson and smiled.

"The farm will be here waiting, if he wants it," she said. —DT



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