

It's so dry; trees lean toward the dogs

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN
CAMP HILL — The second annual Keystone Cornucopia proved once again that this ever growing event sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations literally has it all.

The "Horn of Plenty" affair held Monday night offered:

- All the food that anyone could ever hope to eat in a single sitting.
- The opulence of the Grand Ballroom of the Penn Harris Motor Inn.
- A chance for representatives of farm organizations from across the Commonwealth to congregate and get their legislative act together.
- And then an opportunity to pigeon-hole assembled legislators and play that act in an informal lobbying atmosphere.
- And finally, a speaker with down-home humor right out of the Smokey Mountains of Tennessee.

If anything more might be wanted, it would have to be a way to serve the more than 600-person audience in less than two hours. For this was the only drawback at the Cornucopia. Those people at the last table to go through the serving line had to be well stocked with the earlier Hors D'oeuvres in order to last the near two-hour wait.

But the wait had to be worth it — with some 40 different food items all from Pennsylvania except one. And if the planning committee could find a greenhouse owner willing to try growing coffee that final non-Pa. item might be eliminated.

"We used to get 200 or so at these legislative dinners before," explained Robert Hodge, retiring

president of the Council and the evening's MC.

"Last year's Cornucopia had some 500 and this year topped 600." Two extra tables had to be hastily put together to handle the large turnout.

But the object of the event after all is to let farmers and agribusiness representatives rub elbows with legislators and get the ag story across once again.

Prior to the dinner, a session was held with ag legislators or their aides.

Bill Sonntag, representing Ed Helfrick, head of the Senate Ag Committee, gave an idea of what might be coming up in ag legislation during the coming session.

"We need to review the performance of the major ag acts passed in the last two years and possibly fine tune them to handle some questions of implementation that have come up," he said.

He referred to the Right To Farm Bill and the Ag Area Security Bill.

He pointed to the need to keep Pennsylvania farm products competitive in the market place and specifically exempting various haulers, such as feed, fertilizer and milk, from various PUC regulations.

"If you look at the recent list of Master Farmers, you'll see that two of the seven had direct retail outlets for their products," he said.

"We need an amendment to Act 319 which would give landowners a one-time split-off of a couple of acres to permit commercial diversification on farms without the penalty of roll-back taxes."

Other needs included com-



First in line for some good Pennsylvania beef is Penny Hallowell, ag secretary.

pulsory beverage container return, local options to fund deed restrictions to preserve farmland, animal statue update and adequate funding of ag research programs, such as soil testing.

Speaking at the banquet were Sen. Robert Jubelirer, Senate majority leader; Ag Sec. Penrose Hallowell who brought greetings from the Governor and retiring president Hodge.

Featured speaker for the evening was Walt Buescher, retired from the farm equipment industry, and now a resident of Pigeon Forge, Tn. who travels the speakers' circuit under the sponsorship of Sperry New Holland.

With his down-home, male Minnie Pearl type humor, Buescher mixed one-liners with a message of the need for farmers to promote the marketing of their products.

Some examples:

"Pigeon Forge is so small that when you plug in the toaster, the street lights go dim.

"The fire department is three dogs.

"You folks who bleed green and want to be buried in Moline will have a rotary combine one of these days, too.

"Agriculture has something to do with farming and farming is doing it.

"The farmer takes all the risks of other businesses and then has the weather, too.

"Sometimes, it's so dry the trees lean toward the dogs.

"And it's so wet you can't plow



Earl B. Hall, of the Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore, chats with State FFA representatives Mike Pfautz, Eastern VP; and Barry Geib, treasurer.

for an hour after eating.

"We never produce too much; we just sell too little.

"Agriculture is the only industry that's excused from selling its own product.

Senate finance committee member voices "optimism"

HONOLULU — The Senate leader who two years ago helped shape the Reagan Administration's economic package—the Kemp-Roth bill—remains "bullish on America's future."

Senator William V. Roth (R-DE) told some 700 cooperative leaders attending the 54th annual meeting of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives here recently: "While it is by no means unanimous, there does appear to be an emerging consensus that there will be a moderate upturn in the economy."

The Delaware senator, third-ranking member of the powerful Senate Finance Committee, bases his optimism on a continued downturn in interest rates. Sen. Roth blames high interest rates for depressing the housing and auto industries, and being a major cause of bankruptcies for many farmers and small businessmen. He said high interest rates are also responsible for driving the value of the dollar to record low levels, thereby encouraging imports and discouraging exports.

To achieve a continued drop in interest rates will require an assist from the Federal Reserve Board which, in the senator's view, "has the power to bring real interest rates down to the level that would allow and encourage recovery in 1983."

Sen. Roth says the time is right for "a bold initiative on the monetary side." He's hopeful that

the federal government "will maintain a steady hand on fiscal policy, as the economy turns around," predicting that the Federal Reserve "will make a dramatic move to lower interest rates. Such a move, said Roth, is critically important to enable us to make the structural reforms necessary to meet the challenge of the technological revolution of the '80s.

Sen. Roth predicts that President Reagan "will continue to have a pretty good batting average in the next Congress" but believes the president will have to be willing to compromise, particularly on defense spending. "I do not believe the U.S. can afford to increase defense spending as proposed by the President when our economy is so weak," he said. "Our economy must be given top priority."

The third-term Delaware senator saved his harshest criticism for fellow politicians; commentators and journalists for their "gloom and doom prophecies about a coming depression." He said, "depression talk helps scare off the fledgling recovery by undermining the confidence of consumers and investors."

"These remarks may make the headlines," he concluded, "but they are unsettling and, more important, totally inaccurate. There simply is no comparison between today's economic conditions and those of the thirties."



MC and retiring president of the Pa. State Council of Farm Organizations Robert Hodge, left, with featured speaker Walt Buescher.



Commodity queens at Keystone Cornucopia include, from the left, Sheila McDaniel, Erie County, grape; Kelly Mummert, Adams County poultry; Angela DiProspero, Kennett Square, mushroom; Kelly Barr, Franklin County, honey; Jean Mobilia, Erie County, apple; and LuAnn Breneman, Lancaster County dairy.