

34 counties participate in Clean & Green

HARRISBURG — More than half of all Pennsylvania counties are now participating in the Clean and Green Act, which was enacted to help preserve the state's farmland, forest land and open spaces, according to State

Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell.

In the annual summary of participation in the act, the Agriculture Department disclosed that 18,856 participants and 1,516,630 acres of farm and forest

land in the state have been enrolled under provisions of the Clean and Green Act (Act 319 of 1974).

"The act has been successful in many areas in helping preserve our farmland resources," Hallowell said. "Many farmers

have used the act to reduce their annual costs of operation through its farm value assessment provisions."

The Clean and Green Act became law in 1974 after Pennsylvanians voted for a constitutional amendment permitting preferential assessment of farmlands and forest lands. Under the act, enrolled land is assessed for tax purposes at its farm use value rather than its market value for development purposes.

Thirty-four counties now report participation under the act, the first time a majority of counties have shown such participation. Delaware and Westmoreland Counties have reported enrollment for the first time.

Washington County statistics which detail 1981 participation show 4,422 individuals enrolled under the act, more than any other county. Bradford County is a close second with 4,000 participants reported for 1982. Three counties showed only two participants and one reported only three. Large increases in participation during 1982 were evident in Beaver, Lehigh and Potter Counties.

The greatest number of acres reported 387,919, were in Bradford County. McKean County ranks second in acreage enrolled, with Huntingdon County third. Lancaster County reported the least acreage enrolled among par-

ticipating counties.

The average reduction in dollar value assessments per acre under the act, based on 24 county estimates, was 54 percent. This average is not weighted to account for greater participation in counties, and no correlation between the percentage of reduction and participation in the program can be drawn.

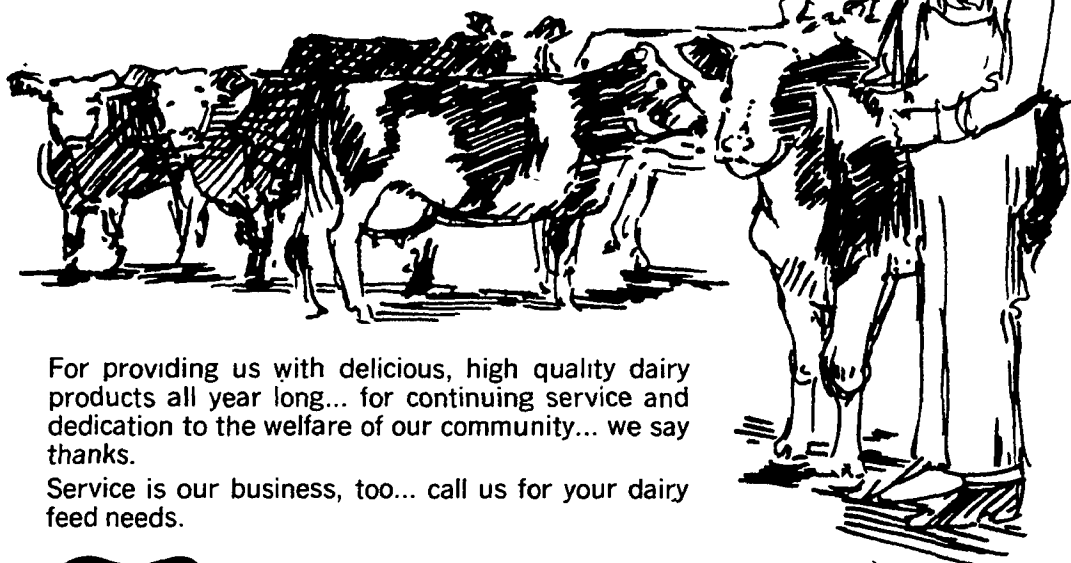
Under regulations adopted by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 1980, County Assessors are required to submit information regarding county participation in Act 319 each year. This information is then compiled into a summarized report.

For 1982, survey forms were sent to 66 counties and 65 returned the forms. Washington County used 1981 figures due to the large number of participants in the county, affording inadequate time to compile the 1982 results.

The report, compiled by the Department's Office of Planning and Research, is not intended to analyze the effectiveness of the Clean and Green Act nor its administration by the counties. Its purpose is to provide current data on participation.

Single copies of the report are available from the Office of Planning and Research, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

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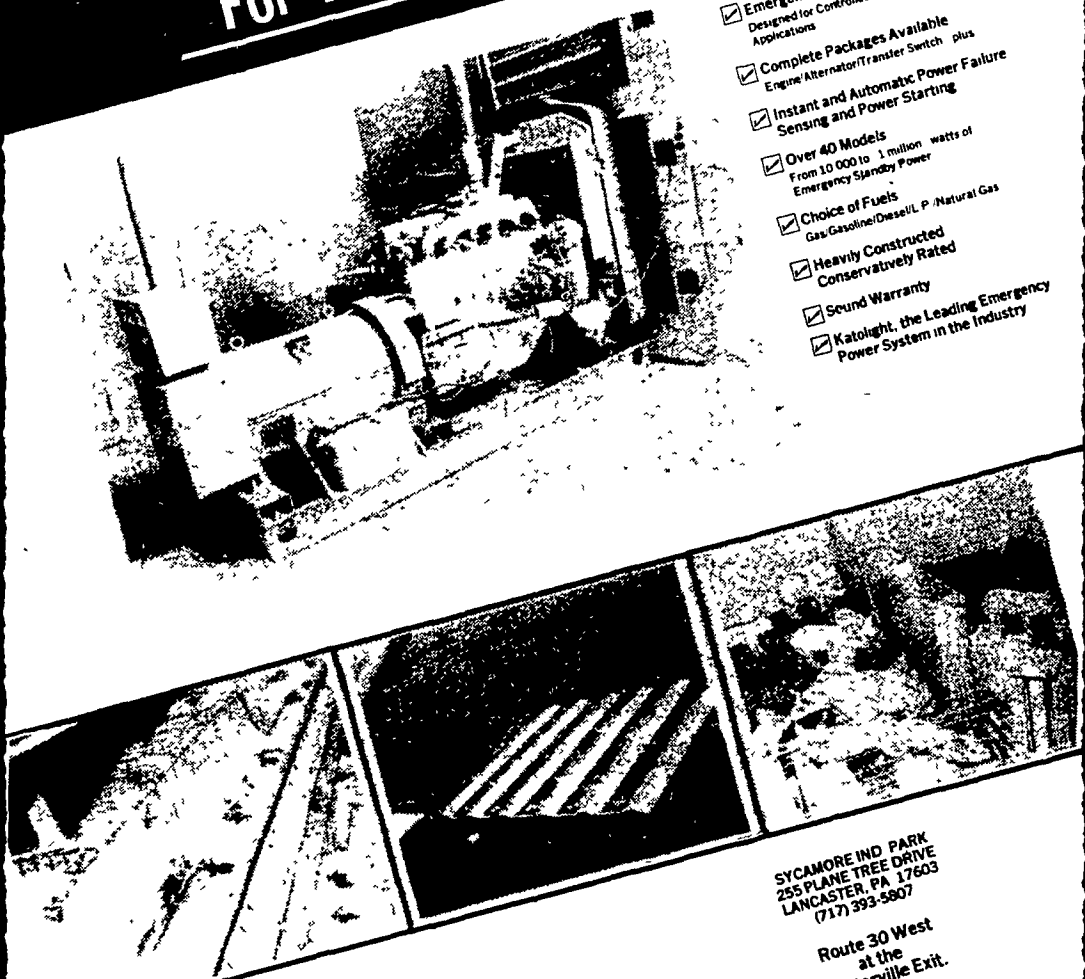
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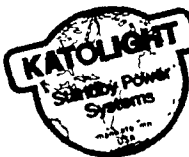


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