

Smith cites contributions of Lackawanna ag

SCRANTON — Dr. Samuel H. Smith, dean of Penn State's College of Agriculture and director of the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service was the featured speaker at the annual meeting of the Lackawanna County Extension Service. Dr. Smith spoke on "A New Commitment to an Old Partnership" and the importance of agriculture in the county.

The partnership to which he referred is the county, state, and federal partnership of the Cooperative Extension Service. It is also the partnership which links the resources of the land grant university at Penn State to the people of Pennsylvania.

Like any public organization, Extension needs to constantly adjust and change to meet the changing needs of the people it serves.

"I have been telling people across the state something that I firmly believe and that is both agriculture and colleges of agriculture are in a period of transition," said Dr. Smith. "As we continue to develop new knowledge and new technology, we must get it into the pipelines to the users as quickly and efficiently as possible."

Dr. Smith commended the Lackawanna County Commissioners for providing more than \$24,000 in county funding for Extension in 1982. If housing and other extra services provided are included, this amount would be closer to \$50,000.

The amount of federal and state dollars that came from Penn State to support Lackawanna Extension programs totaled \$138,799 in the fiscal period ending June 30 of this year.

Lackawanna's agricultural operation includes 400 productive farms that brought in cash receipts of more than \$12 million last year. Dairy products brought in slightly more than \$4.2 million of this total and meat animal products added another \$4.1 million.

Lackawanna County has many



Dr. Samuel H. Smith

businesses that are considered ag-related. They provide agriculture with goods and services, process, transport or distribute ag products and generally add to the economy of the county.

The lumber industry is a good example. Over sixty percent of the land area is forested. People do not generally consider forest products part of the "agricultural economy" but these are county products that result in income and employment for Lackawanna County.

Dr. Smith pointed out that the lumber and wood products industry is comprised of 24 establishments employing 412 people.

"Local support for Extension projects has been outstanding in this county," said Dr. Smith. "Your adult leaders have increased 25 percent and 4-H enrollment has doubled over the past few years. Fertilization and variety programs saved farmers \$43,000 during the 1983 growing season."

With the introduction of new hybrid varieties and the expansion of production, Lackawanna County has become a center of distribution for tomato plants. This year over six million transplants provided

gross sales of nearly \$250,000.

Dr. Smith talked about some of the trends which are developing in agriculture.

"I believe that despite some temporary setbacks as a result of the general economic recession, some overproduction in dairy products, and the drought this year, there is strong evidence for continued growth of Pennsylvania agriculture," said Dr. Smith.

Pennsylvania has the fastest growing livestock and poultry industry in the Northeastern states at the present time.

Pennsylvania also leads the Northeast in food processing and manufacturing and plays a major roll in food distribution.

Pennsylvania export markets are also growing. Pennsylvania's agricultural exports reached a record \$565 million in 1982, up from \$300 million in 1978. Approximately 4.5 percent of the state's agricultural and food products were exported last year.

It is generally recognized that a major reason for U.S. agriculture's amazing success is its technological base. At the heart of this base are the research and educational programs of landgrant universities, such as Penn State.

There is a concern at the national level that Extension improves what is called the "technology transfer network" of the USDA/Land-Grant System.

The dean explained that Pennsylvania is moving ahead on plans to use computers to collect and relay information swiftly between researcher, Extension workers, and clientele groups.

Penn State will be asking, in fiscal 1984-85, for \$1.9 million through Penn State's operational budget request to the state legislature to purchase the necessary hardware and software to establish an Extension Computer Network in Pennsylvania.

Penn State has been selected as the site of a Northeast Computer Institute serving agriculture and Extension in 11 participating

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Lackawanna Extension honored



Sam Smith, Dean of the College of Agriculture at Penn State, presented certificates of recognition for cooperation in the Extension program at the annual meeting of the Lackawanna County Cooperative Extension Association.

First row, left to right, are Fred Eckel, Schultzville; Audrey Naylor, Factoryville; Dr. Smith and Tom Jurchak, County Extension Director.

Second row, Keith Eckel, Schultzville; Wilfred Richards, Dalton; Roy Thompson, Newton; James Schrig, Dalton; Doug Eckel, Schultzville; Richard Pallman, Newton; William Schlosser, Clarks Summit; and Brian Pallman, Newton.

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