

# Energy council develops anaerobic digester program

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Governor's Energy Council is developing a program to encourage the installation of anaerobic digester systems on Pennsylvania farms.

Such systems, by producing methane gas from animal wastes, provide farmers with the ability to produce a significant share of the energy they consume, to generate a year-round source of income through the sale of energy, and to reduce the nutrient run-off problem frequently associated with animal waste handling.

Anaerobic digester systems are in operation on several Pennsylvania farms, and on the basis of these and other systems in other states, the evidence is growing that anaerobic digester facilities make good sense for farmers in these days of high energy prices.

The economics of such systems are most favorable for herds of several hundred animals, so up to now only the large farms can take advantage of this technology. The agricultural energy program of the

Governor's Energy Council is designed to encourage the development of digester projects which receive and utilize the animal wastes from farms with smaller animal herds.

There are two parts to the Governor's Energy Council's program. The first part will be the preparation and publication of a workbook which will provide information about the various technical, economic, and managerial issues that must be understood in starting a digester project. In addition, several workshops will be offered this spring throughout Pennsylvania on starting such projects.

The second part of the agricultural energy program will be grants offered to fund site-specific feasibility studies of proposed projects. The Governor's Energy Council will pay up to \$10,000 or 80 percent of the cost of such studies, whichever is less. The key requirement for project funding is that the proposed projects must be designed to use

the animal wastes from more than one farm.

Feasibility study grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, and the request for grant proposals will be issued in January. Proposals will be due March 9, 1984, and the actual feasibility study

work will begin soon thereafter.

The agricultural energy program is being managed by the renewable energy section of the Governor's Energy Council. The key staff people involved in the program are Roger E. Clark and

Linda J. DeLiberty. Their telephone number is (717) 783-9978. If you would like more information about this program, please contact the Governor's Energy Council, P.O. Box 8010, Harrisburg, PA 17015.

## Snack quiz is featured

FARM SHOW — A snack quiz and information on health risks, telephone options and computerized money management caught the eye of the visitors to the home economics section at the Farm Show.

Participants in the snack quiz were asked to choose six snacks from a list of twelve to total less than 600 calories. "Most people are surprised to learn that a wedge of watermelon contains about 110 calories, the highest on the list," said Patricia Huff, Dauphin County Home Economist. "What we're trying to do is create an awareness of just how many

calories are in natural snacks."

Computers were another popular part of the family living demonstrations. Visitors saw how close their spending habits paralleled the average for the rest of the country. "People can see if they are spending more in a particular category such as food than the average," said Margaret Ezelle, Penn State Extension family living specialist. "If they are spending more than the average, they may want to take a closer look at their

buying habits. There is also a program that can show you what it costs to run your car, and a comparison of an intended new car purchase.

Nancy Alcorn, Allegheny County Home Economist, and representatives from the telephone company explained consumer telephone options. "People have to start thinking of their telephones the way they think of their other appliances in the home," said Alcorn.

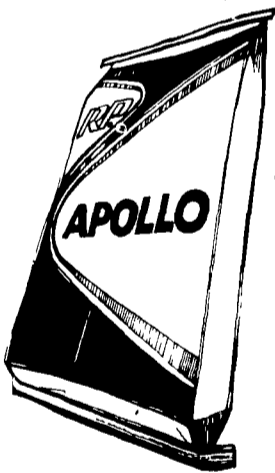
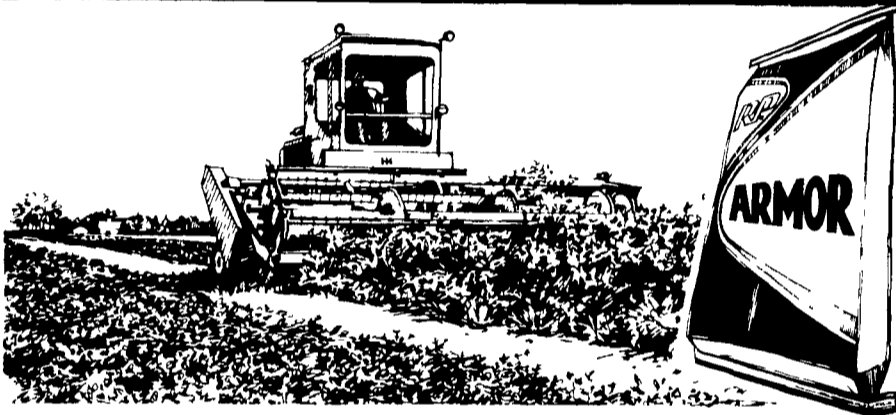
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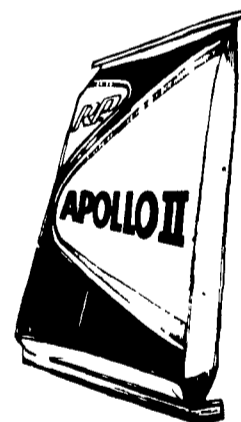
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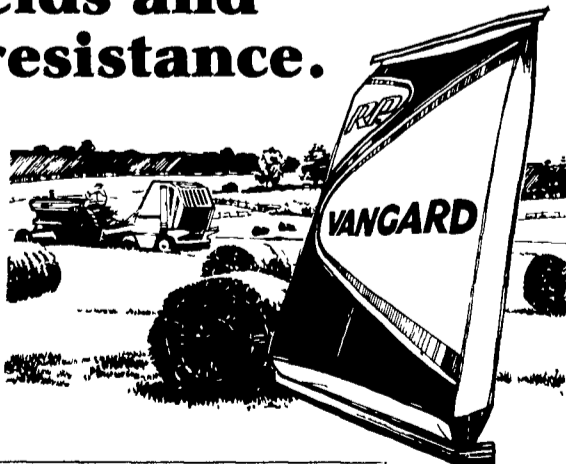
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