

Md. conservation suit settled

BALTIMORE, Md. — The federal court in Baltimore has approved the settlement of a three-year-old antitrust suit brought against him, his department and five Eastern Shore soil conservation districts, Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Wayne A. Cawley, Jr., has announced.

Six private earthmoving firms, charging that the five districts

violated antitrust laws by furnishing earthmoving services to landowners for implementing soil conservation practices, sought \$7 million in damages.

The companies, however, agreed to a settlement which only established limited restriction on certain specific activities of the five districts. These restrictions do not apply to the Department of

Agriculture or its Secretary.

The districts are created as local political subdivisions and have extensive responsibilities in conserving Maryland's valuable soil resources. Not only that, but

they are an integral and necessary element in Maryland's clean water program, according to the Secretary. "Maryland's soil conservation district will play a vital role in Agriculture's five point initiative designed to eliminate nonpoint source pollution of the Chesapeake Bay," Cawley said.

The districts affected by the settlement are located in Wicomico, Worcester, Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Somerset Counties. The settlement provides for the entry of a consent order which prohibits the providing of earth moving services not related to soil conservation.

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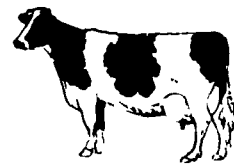
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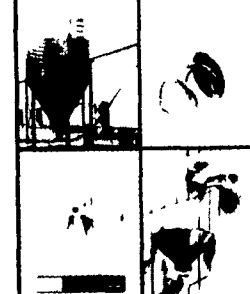
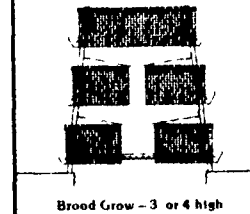
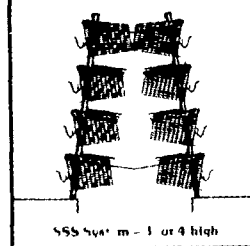
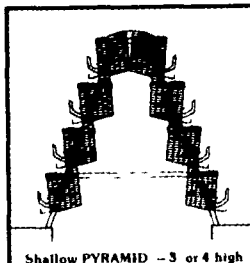
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