

Hallowell promotes Pa. ag in Middle East

HARRISBURG — State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell this week was in Bahrain for MEFEX '84 in hopes of further stimulating Pennsylvania's foreign trade opportunities for food and agricultural products.

Hallowell, who serves as president of the Eastern United States Agriculture and Food Export Council, took samples of several Pennsylvania food products to be displayed at MEFEX '84, the largest trade show in the Middle East. The show attracts 40 U.S. exhibitors and over

1,000 buyers from the Middle East region.

Those producers exhibited were from Pennsylvania firms, including Winnix Inc., Union County; Ontolane Orchards, Berks County; John Rice Fruit Co. and Mountain Orchard Cooperative, both of Adams County; Hanover Brands Inc., York County; Simon Candy Co., Lancaster County; and Colonial Beef Co., Philadelphia.

"Expansion of Pennsylvania's Foreign agricultural trade has been a top initiative of the Thorn-

burgh Administration," said Secretary Hallowell prior to his departure. "Agricultural exports have been a real bright spot for Pennsylvania and this country. U.S. farm products stimulate our employment rate and generate billions of dollars in commerce each year," he added. Pennsylvania's agricultural trade topped \$560 million in 1982.

Last week in London, Hallowell attended a trade reception with British trade officials hosted by W. Lybb Abbott, director of the Agricultural Trade Office in the U.S. Embassy.

The secretary, accompanied by Winson Eveland of Winnix, Inc.,

met with Egyptian agricultural officials and businessmen on Feb. 23 before flying onto Bahrain. The Cairo meeting was hosted by Clancy Jean, U.S. agricultural counselor in Egypt.

"These meetings and the all important food show are key links in our agricultural marketing chain. We hope to reach many customers in the Middle East," said Hallowell, noting that the U.S. has a net export trade balance of more than \$1.4 billion each year from trade with countries such as Egypt, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"We will make every effort to

cultivate the opportunities we have in these countries to bring their consumers the finest in Pennsylvania produce and processed products," he said. The secretary was scheduled to return to the U.S. on Friday.

MEFEX '84 is organized by the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Potato vote set to begin

DENVER, Col. — "Be sure to vote in the March referendum." This is the message Jack Nielson, of Nebraska, and Keith Masser, of Pennsylvania, co-chairman of the Referendum Committee, want to send all eligible potato growers.

Many other food associations have far larger promotional budgets, often for smaller crops. The Potato Board has had the same budget since 1972, and of course, inflation has drastically reduced its buying power.

In order for the referendum to pass, two-thirds of growers voting must check yes. Last time the Board held a referendum the turnout was low, and "I think some of that was because we did not

communicate with growers. This year we are working very hard to make sure growers know the issues involved and how important it is they vote," Nielson concluded.

Ballots will be mailed to all eligible growers by early March and must be returned to the U.S.D.A. by April 4. (An eligible grower is one who has at least five acres devoted to potatoes). In addition, Board Members will have copies of the ballots for anyone who has not received a ballot. Growers are encouraged to contact a Board Member if they have not received their ballots or have any questions concerning the referendum.



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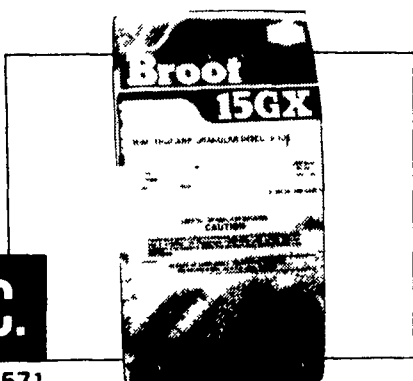
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