

## PFA legislative priorities

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most emotional and likely most discussed by farmers — appears to be in trouble, at least for this year.

With the introduction of new Milk Security Fund legislation that is aimed at getting the bankrupt program back on sound financial footing, this ever-present economic threat to state dairymen is lessened.

"This has been a serious issue of the past two years," Eckel said, "and the new legislation should receive favorable action from the General Assembly."

Long-term, Eckel and the PFA launched an effort for farmland preservation before a joint session of the House and Senate ag committees the week before.

"We must make a long-term commitment to preserve farmland, not for a few years or a lifetime, but for generations to come," Eckel said.

"The key is a well-financed purchase of development rights program. All Pennsylvanians will benefit and all Pennsylvanians will need to share in paying for it."

And the third concern is the one that has been demonstrated by county associations along roadways throughout the state and one that becomes more emotional and personal because each and every member of a farm family has been contending with it on a growing basis.

That, of course, is the trash tossed along roads and into fields, particularly the beverage cans and bottles.

And while each farmer attending the conference likely related closest to this issue and probably brought it up more readily in Capitol contacts during the day, it is the proposed legislation calling for a mandatory deposit that seemingly is in the most stalled position at least for the moment.

The strong container and beverage lobby has apparently been pushing its loss-of-job leverage to the utmost, particularly in the western part of the state.

Eckel stood before the packed audience at the Penn Harris Motor Inn and traced the life span and costs of that trash, which can end up embedded in a tractor tire or the gut of a cow.

Holding up the paper sack: "It takes three years for this to decompose."

Next, a steel can: "This won't rot away until after five years."

An aluminum can: "This takes 500 years to decompose."

Plastic container: "Twelve to 17 years to disappear."

And finally a brown beer bottle: "Now, this critter takes one million years to decompose."



Crawford County delegation at PFA Legislative Banquet in Harrisburg this week includes, seated from left, Alden Post, Jean Scouten and Cathy Miller; standing from the left, Wilson Gum, Rep. Tom Swift, Rep. Jim Merry and Orlo Burnham.

Eckel estimated it costs Pennsylvania farmers some \$37 million a year to contend with the cans, bottles and trash.

And, he reported, it costs state taxpayers \$64.00 a mile to clean up highways and if that amount were projected for PennDOT over the entire road network, it would amount to some \$3 million a year.

## PFA urges rabies action

CHAMBERSBURG — The Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) has urged the General Assembly to take measures to upgrade the state's diagnostic and research facilities to meet the deadly threat of rabies which is spreading in southcentral Pennsylvania.

At a hearing of the House Committee on Health and Welfare today, PFA spokesman John Stoner of Mercersburg, Franklin County, said, presently, "...our diagnostic and prevention services are so overloaded that we no longer have an accurate way to track the spread or seriousness of the disease."

He added, "The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's diagnostic facilities can no longer test all rabies suspect animals and now limit testing to cases where a person is actually bitten. If we are serious about controlling rabies in Pennsylvania and protecting the citizens of our state from this

disease we must upgrade our diagnostic and research facilities."

Stoner, a dairyman and hog producer, noted that Pennsylvania has experienced an average of two new cases of rabies in domestic animals and wildlife each day this year. He noted that eight members of his family and five neighbor children required a costly four-week series of rabies prevention shots last summer because of exposure to a rabies-suspect cat. "It is easy to see why both I and the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association are concerned about the rabies situation in Pennsylvania," he said.

PFA also expressed support for the concepts contained in legislation, H B 1700, which would require all dogs in the state to be vaccinated against rabies. PFA has policy calling for vaccination of all dogs and also recommending that proof of vaccination be required before licensing.

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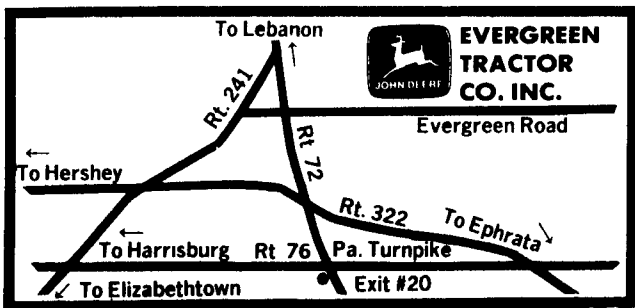
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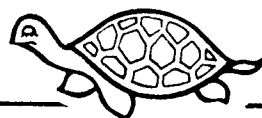
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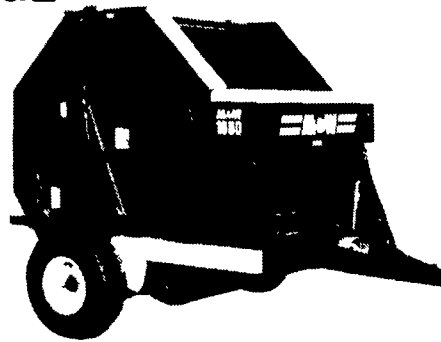


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