

Ag in classroom program moves ahead

HARRISBURG — A statewide task force is working to bring an awareness of modern agriculture and its contributions to Pennsylvania's economy, culture and quality of life into the state's public schools.

Governor Dick Thornburgh directed the State Departments of Agriculture and Education to form the task force, which met for the first time in June, 1983. Since that

time, the Agriculture in the Classroom Task Force has met several times, elected officers and initiated statewide work toward development of resources and implementation of programs.

"Ag in the Classroom is a priority project for Pennsylvania," said State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell. The project has the active support of USDA and its Secretary John

Block, who has declared Ag in the Classroom to be a top priority for USDA.

"Through development of curriculum outlines, identification of resources and development of local efforts, the task force has taken positive steps in bringing an appreciation of agriculture to all students, not just those involved in vocational agriculture programs. A basic understanding of agriculture is essential to insure

our children's future," he said.

At a recent meeting in Harrisburg the task force, which is chaired by Joseph Oravitz, of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, adopted the immediate goals of working with professional staff to develop a K-12 curriculum outline designed for all students, and advocating its use by school administrators and teachers.

The curriculum outline approach was chosen as a means of providing general information which could then be tailored to the needs of individual school districts across the state, while allowing other agriculture-related organizations to use their resources in further in-depth curriculum development.

Oravitz said that the use of a curriculum outline approach would give school districts basic information to incorporate in existing curricula rather than proposing the creation of a new or

additional subject. "This approach allows schools to create awareness in students by bringing in other elements which might be overlooked in a more strict in-depth curriculum," he said.

Task force vice chairman Patrick Toole, of the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, said that the group had organized two committees to coordinate resources and develop programs and activities. A resource and data committee will concentrate its efforts on assembling facts on agriculture and agribusiness, identifying available resources and compiling library and reference materials. The committee on implementation and activities will concentrate on seeking public-private partnerships for developing a media program, teacher training and organization of local efforts.

For more information on Agriculture in the Classroom, call 717-783-8460.

USDA expands classroom program

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "Agriculture in the Classroom," a program designed to help bring about a better understanding of U.S. agriculture among the nation's young people, has been expanded by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block.

The program was launched three years ago by Block in cooperation with farm and agribusiness organizations and state departments of agriculture and education. The program now provides basic knowledge about agriculture to students from the kindergarten level through high school in about 30 states.

Block plans to appoint the first full-time coordinator for the program. He said the coordinator will help the private sector groups and state agencies to expand the program nationwide.

He said he was pleased with the progress made in the "Agriculture in the Classroom" program during

the past three years through efforts of the many organizations and state agencies cooperating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The nation's largest industry, agriculture, employs about 23 million people," Block said. "However, most Americans do not realize what this means to them and to our society. It's our job to

help them, especially the young people, understand the role of agriculture in the national economy and its contribution to our way of life."

In addition to appointing a coordinator, Block said additional resources will be provided to the expanded program through USDA's assistant secretary for science and education.

Adams farmers discuss insurance

GETTYSBURG — Harold Alderfer, Regional Sales Director of Pennsylvania Farmers' Association Insurance Service was a guest at the April meeting of the Adams County Farmers' Association Directors. He discussed PFA Life Insurance policies, which are now earning 11½ per cent interest. Alderfer traced the insurance operating commission and amount paid for claims through the last ten years.

Alderfer warned that in the next 10 years many companies will be merging, some going out of business. Therefore, it is important to watch for the quantity of business a company is doing. There are 57 companies that do farm business and he named several of the stronger ones.

Alderfer touched on Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Insurance rates.

Workmen's Compensation rates have come down in the last several years because of PFA's effort to reduce costs. Alderfer also announced that crop insurance is available now until April 30 for 1984.

Pam Ketterman was appointed by the board of directors as Secretary to replace Mary Mills who has resigned and has accepted regular employment elsewhere.

The directors voted to establish a Feed-Grain Committee. Daniel Winters was appointed to chair this committee.

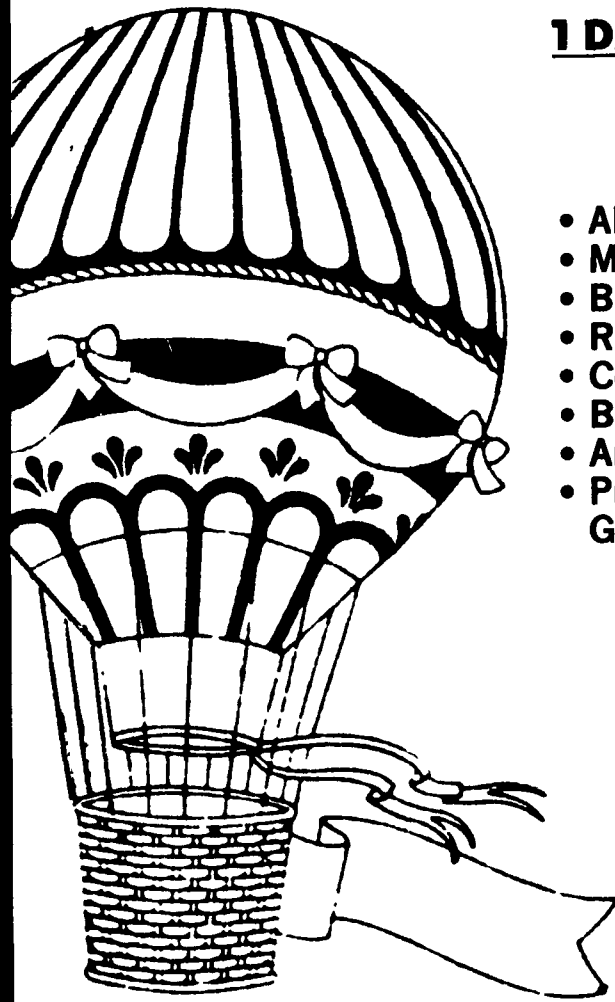
Mrs. Thomas Clowney in her report, urged all people, who do knitting and Jewelry making at home for selling elsewhere, to write to William M. Otter, Dept. of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20210 and request that the federal ban be lifted against this type of activity.

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