

PFA opposes OSHA toilet regulations

CAMP HILL — The Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) is opposing a proposal by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to require placement of toilet and handwashing facilities within one-quarter mile of each agricultural employee working in the field.

this week, PFA said the proposed regulations would, "...seriously alter work procedures for the sake of satisfying imagined and unsupported claims of detrimental health conditions..."

PFA stated: "Pennsylvania is a clear example of the illusory nature of the assumptions made in drafting the proposed rule. In the northeastern part of the state,

many producers of fresh vegetables do not grow their products in concentration on large land tracts. They must rather grow their produce on a series of small, noncontiguous, two-to-twenty acre land tracts spread over a distance of fifteen to twenty miles.

"To comply with the rigid requirements of the proposed rule in these operations, toilet and handwashing facilities would need to be transported several times during the course of a single day, resulting in the utilization of considerable work time to perform such duties.

"The Pennsylvania fruit growing industry, which also employs many seasonal employees in its operation, would also have serious problems with the proposed rule as drafted, not only in terms of compliance but also in terms of interpretation of the rule. Whether the operation utilizes a series of scattered and noncontiguous orchards or utilizes a large single land tract, the fruit grower must depend on the ability to quickly and easily locate his

personnel where harvesting is needed the most, so that severe losses from excess ripening do not occur.

"The proposed rule's mandate for centrally located toilet and handwashing facilities within one quarter mile of all employees would undermine the normal harvesting procedure which have become acceptable to both employers and employees in the fruit industry. To require these employers to pack their employees within one quarter mile of each other would not only reduce the rate of fruit harvesting but also may seriously frustrate the efforts of the individual employees receiving wage incentives to harvest the fruit in accordance with their capabilities, causing lower total wages to be paid and, very

possibly, rising labor unrest."

PFA is recommending that if OSHA's proposal is adopted as a final rule, states with established field sanitation regulations should be granted primacy in enforcement.

PFA stated, "There are few states where regulation of agricultural employers for employee safety, housing and operation is more stringent than Pennsylvania. Agricultural employers in this state are subject to state regulations which are often tougher than their federal counterparts." However, PFA noted, state regulations are flexible, requiring farm employers to provide employees' access to toilet and handwashing facilities at least once every four hours. "Such option would more than fulfill the intended purpose of the proposed rule without burdening the employer with additional costs in purchasing or renting such toilet and handwashing facilities or with cumbersome procedures in daily hauling and placing of such facilities," PFA stated.

Pa. Dairy Promotion Services Inc. to hire state program director

ALTOONA — The board of the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Services Inc. (PDPS Inc), the newly formed organization that directs and manages the state's dairy princess program, this week announced its plans to hire a fulltime program director.

The program director will act as coordinator of the entire princess program and will chaperone the Pa. Dairy Princess. She will assist the county dairy promotion committees in implementing their programs by obtaining their promotional materials and supplying them and their princesses with information and incentive. The program director will also work with the board in planning the Training Seminar in July and the State Pageant in September.

"We're looking for someone with the initiative and creativeness to broaden the princess program," said Mim Kauffman, co-chairman of PDPS Inc. "She should be a role-model for the girls in appearance and have a congenial personality

as well as being affluent in public speaking."

Applicants are asked to send a resume and references to Pa. Dairy Promotion Services Inc., R.D. 3, Box 360, Altoona, PA 16601 before May 15.

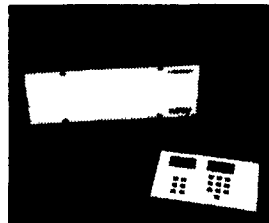
At its recent meeting, the board drew up a job description for the program director, discussed outlines for the Incorporation's bylaws and reviewed plans for the Training Seminar to be held at Lycoming College, Williamsport, July 18 to 20. The dates for the State Pageant, which will be held at the Marriott Inn, Harrisburg, are September 23 to 25.

Members of the PDPS Inc. board are: co-chairmen Judy Diebold, Blair County, and Mim Kauffman, Lancaster County; Rita Kennedy, Butler County, secretary; Pat Miller, Dauphin County, treasurer; Jeanne Peifer, Bradford County, seminar coordinator; and Bev Minor, Washington County.



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