

Produce hotline begins

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania's farm market operators will again receive updated information on pricing of fresh produce in 1984, according to state Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell. This marks the fifth straight year of operation for the

special service for Pennsylvania farm markets, which averages 125 calls per day during the fresh produce marketing season.

The toll-free hotline began operation yesterday and remains in service through Nov. 16. The telephone number for farm

marketers to call is 1-800-932-0904.

Hallowell said, "The toll-free produce hotline provides farm marketers with information on average retail prices for in-season farm produce. Greater stability in pricing allows a more orderly marketing of our farm produce."

Information on retail prices is tallied by the Bureau of Markets and revised twice weekly, on Monday and Thursday. As new crops come into season, they are included in the pricing information available on the hotline.

"The hotline is just one part of the Department's overall effort to improve the marketing of farm products in the commonwealth," Hallowell said. "Through promotional campaigns, we are also trying to show the Pennsylvania consumer the great

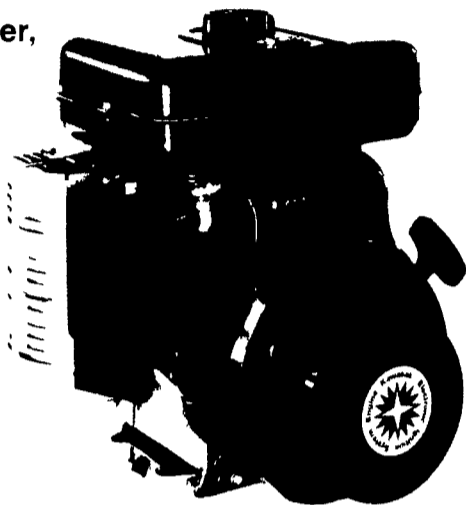
diversity and availability of Pennsylvania food products." The Department has also published a Consumer's Guide to Direct Marketing which identifies more than 500 direct farmer-to-consumer markets across the state.

The hotline was initiated as a pilot project in cooperation with the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service in 1980. Since that time, the program has been funded and operated by the state Department of Agriculture.

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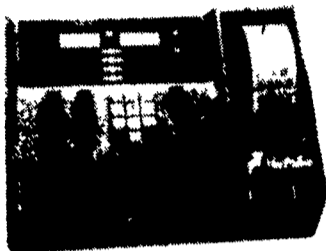
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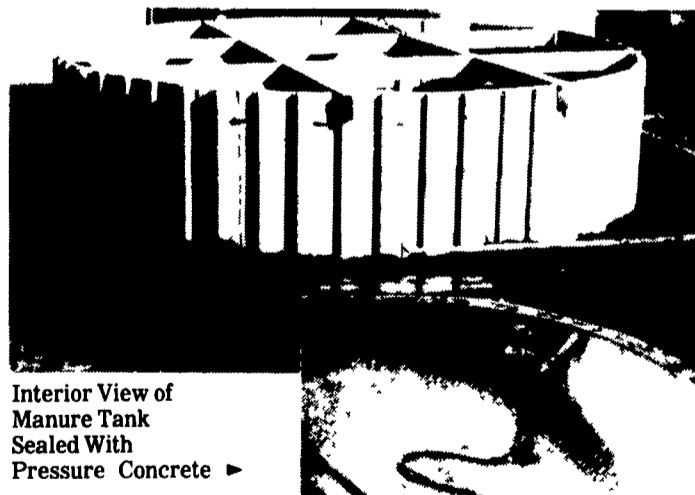
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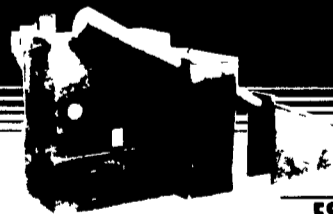
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