

Marydel Farm receives environmental award

NEWARK, Del. — Two Kent County farmers have been honored for their commitment to preserving the quality of Delaware's environment.

The Thomas Farms of Marydel, run by the father and son team of Isaac and John Thomas, was one of three recipients of the Governor's Advisory Council on Environmental Control's 1984 environmental achievement awards. The Thomases were recognized for their use of production practices which minimize soil and water erosion, as well as their efficient waste management system, water control structures and woodland management.

Governor Pierre S. duPont presented the citation during a special ceremony Wednesday, June 20, in his Legislative Hall office in Dover.

Isaac "Ike" Thomas recently retired from active farming, but his lifelong agricultural conservation efforts are being continued by his son, who now operates the family's 1,000-acre dairy farm.

Conservation is a way of life for the Thomases. Ike was 19 when he became treasurer of the 145-year-old tax ditch in his community. As a member of the Delaware House of Representatives in 1941, he was instrumental in developing the state's Soil Conservation District Enabling Act and he has been an unpaid member of the Kent Conservation District since its inception in 1943. Besides chairing his own district, he has served as chairman of the Delaware Association of Conservation Districts and as a director of the National Association of Conservation Districts.

Thomas was one of the first farmers in the state to adopt minimum tillage practices, which reduce soil erosion. In addition, he and his son have installed a modern waste management system which allows them to use dairy manure as fertilizer, thus reducing environmental contamination while benefiting crops.

Milking parlor wastes, for example, are spray irrigated onto cropland.

To maintain soil and water resources on their farm, the Thomases also practice woodlot management and have installed water control structures such as tile drainage systems and a fish pond. They are active in ditch bank maintenance.

In accepting the award on behalf of his family, Ike Thomas expressed appreciation to the Soil Conservation Service and University of Delaware Cooperative Extension Service for their help in putting such conservation programs to use on his farm.

Also recognized at the ceremony were the E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company Glasgow site for its state-of-the-art hazardous waste container storage facility and emergency pollution prevention program, and the State Department of Transportation for its development of a construction plan for the St. Jones River bridge on U. S. 113 south of Dover which minimizes filling of wetlands.



Grover Biddle, left, head of the Governor's Advisory Council on Environmental Control, reads citation to members of the Isaac Thomas family prior to award presentation by Governor duPont of Delaware.

Dairy promotion bill awaits approval

HARRISBURG — A bill, sponsored by Senator Noah W. Wenger, R-36, establishing a statewide Dairy Products Promotion Program, has received the unanimous support of the Senate and House and is now awaiting gubernatorial approval, the senator announced.

Currently, the Department of Agriculture is carrying out Pennsylvania's dairy promotion under authorization of a federal law requiring dairy farmers to pay a 15-cent dairy promotion and research fee for each 100 pounds of milk sold, Wenger noted.

"This measure will improve this

system by permitting the state Budget Secretary to set up an interest bearing account, supported by dairy farmers' contributions, that would fund all our state's dairy promotions," Wenger, vice-chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, explained.

"With gubernatorial approval of this legislation, there will be a state statute providing for a dime

of our state dairy farmers' 15-cent federal contribution to stay in the Commonwealth, enabling us to better promote Keystone State dairy products."

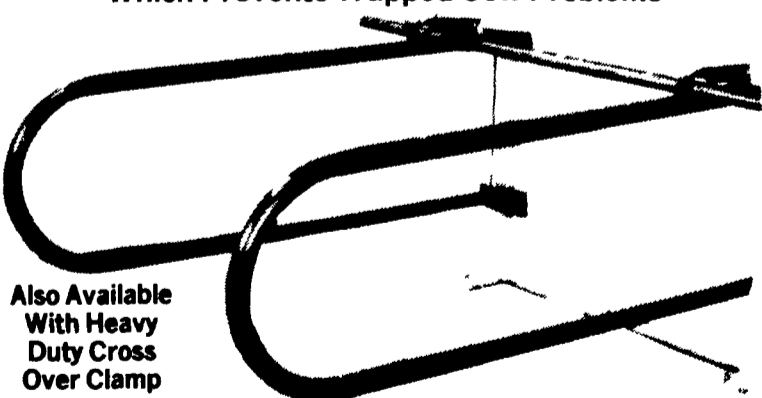
Wenger emphasized that the planned program's funding will be financed solely by voluntary contributions credited against assessments paid to the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board.

"With one-hundred percent cooperation of Pennsylvania's dairy farmers, our state stands to realize over \$2 million annually as a source for promotional activities," Wenger said.

"Through a volunteer effort on the part of our state's dairy farmers," the senator concluded, "Pennsylvania's marketing and promotional objectives for our own state's milk supply should be much better served than on the present federal level."

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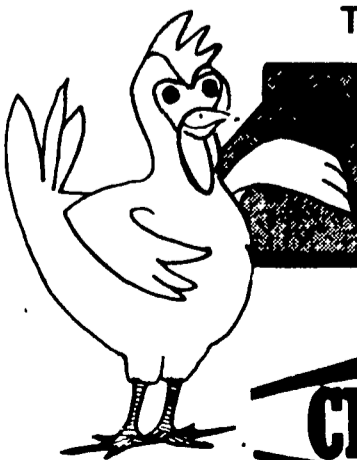
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