

Sheetz urges caution on ag bond issue

HARRISBURG — Rep. Terry Sheetz (R-Lancaster) has called on the state Agriculture Secretary to ensure conservative administration of a bond issue program for Pennsylvania agriculture.

The 99th District lawmaker told Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell that the success of a \$10 million loan program will depend "on your interpretation of the legislation and the latitude you allow in its implementation."

"I supported the legislation to implement the bond issue approved by voters in April," Sheetz said. "But I have serious reservations about the effect such a program could have on Pennsylvania agriculture if it's not properly managed and carefully scrutinized."

"There is evidence all around us of agricultural loans made by banks and government agencies that will end up doing farmers more harm than good. I've asked the Agriculture Secretary to ensure that the bond issue program aids, rather than hinders agricultural development."

In a letter to Sec. Hallowell, Sheetz noted that the agricultural community, given the chance to vote on the existence of the loan program, would probably reject the idea.

"However, the legislature acted on the will of all the people in establishing the bond issue program," concluded Sheetz.

"We must see that the program results in a positive effect on Pennsylvania's agriculture. By working together, the legislature, the Agriculture Secretary and

others in state government can see that it does."

Rep. Sheetz's letter to Sec. Hallowell states:

Honorable Penrose Hallowell
Department of Agriculture
211 Agriculture Office Building
2301 North Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Dear Secretary Hallowell:

On June 26, 1984, I voted in favor of Senate Bill 1438, legislation which will implement the \$10 million agricultural aid portion of the bond issue approved by voters in April. I supported the bill, but I have some very serious concerns about the effect it could have on Pennsylvania agriculture.

My initial impression is that if the program is not administered in a very conservative manner, it will help only a few and maintain agriculture in a position of weakness.

I am writing to you, Mr. Secretary, because of the importance of the authority vested in you and other members of the Advisory Commission created by this legislation. The success of this program will depend on your interpretation of the legislation and the latitude you allow in its implementation.

There is evidence everywhere today of agricultural loans made by banks and government agencies that should never have been made. Today, recipient farmers often find themselves in worse positions than they were before the loans were made. My concern is that we

not allow this program to result in similar circumstances.

If farmers were given the ability to control their own destiny in the case of the bond issue for agricultural loans, I doubt if this program would have been approved. However, the legislature acted on the will of all the people in establishing the bond issue program. Let's assure that it results in a positive effect on Pennsylvania's agriculture. With your help, it will.

Sincerely,
Terry R. Sheetz
State Representative
99th Legislative District

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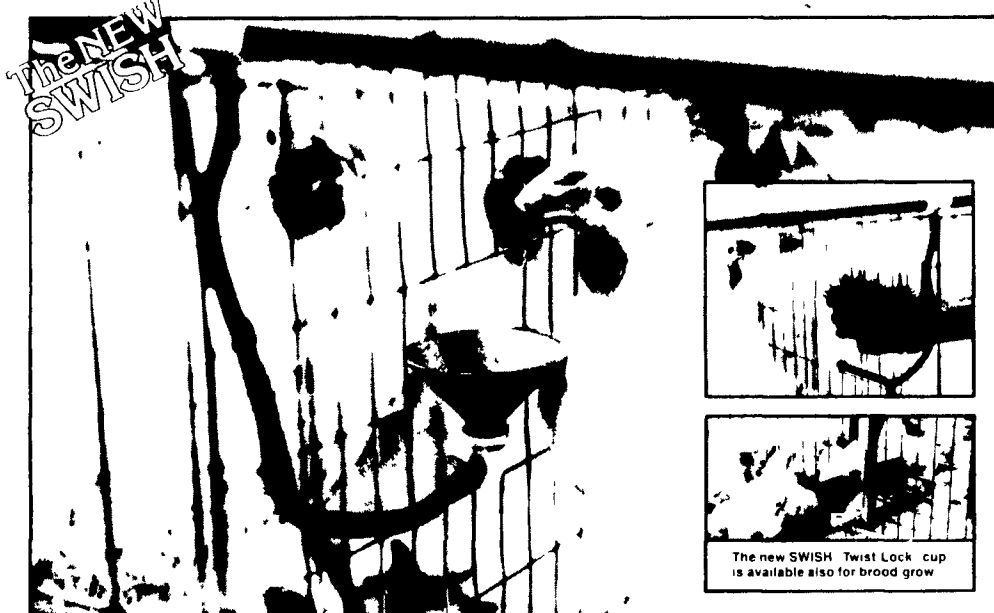
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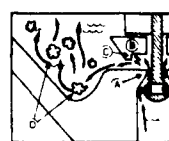
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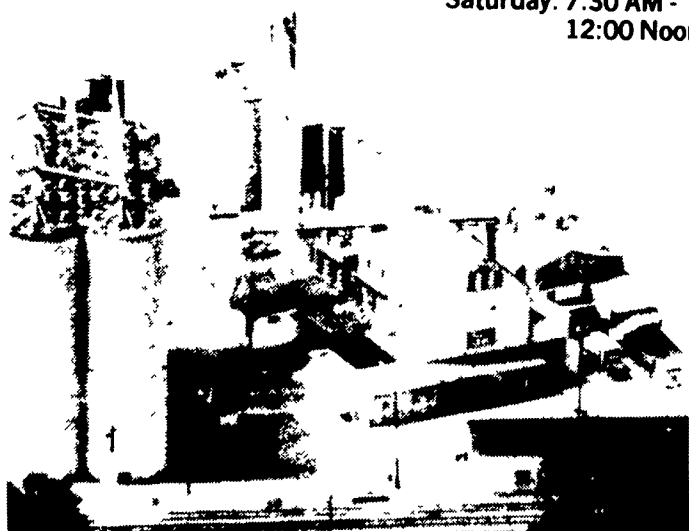
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