

Pa. files multiple charges against Scheps

SCRANTON — Attorney General LeRoy S. Zimmerman this week charged the owner of Scheps Cheese Co. with bilking 321 Pennsylvania dairy farmers, who were regular suppliers to a Wyoming County cheesemaking plant, out of \$3.6 million worth of milk.

The alleged scam, said Zimmerman, also resulted in at least 40 of the 321 farmers being forced to pay higher interest rates on mortgages or personal loans in order to save their homes after Benedict Scheps allegedly failed to forward their loan payments.

Zimmerman said his Bureau of Criminal Investigation was filing charges of writing bad checks, theft, theft by deception, theft by failure to make required disposition of funds received and deceptive business practices against Scheps.

Similar charges also were filed against Scheps Cheese Co. of Haledon, N.J., of which Scheps was the president, and Bradford County Farms, Inc., also controlled by Scheps and set up to acquire milk in order to produce cheese closer to Pennsylvania milk suppliers.

Both companies since July, 1983 have been in bankruptcy proceedings.

Aside from the bad-checks and theft charges, Zimmerman said Scheps will face charges that he failed to remit withheld personal income taxes.

Zimmerman said that Bradford County Farms, Inc., while buying milk from the 321 farmers, worked out a "milk assignment agreement" with 40 of them, under which the firm was to make direct loan payments on behalf of the

farmers to the federal Farmers Home Administration.

The agency never received those direct payments, totalling \$200,000; it found the farmers in arrears by at least three months and threatened to foreclose on their mortgages or take other legal action for failure to make timely payments on the loans.

In many cases, the farmers were forced to pay higher interest rates on their outstanding loans in order to save their homes, Zimmerman said.

The Attorney General last August issued an opinion authorizing the state Milk Marketing Board to begin paying farmers their share of a \$2.6

million appropriation set up to help offset financial losses suffered by the farmers.

That money, backed up by Zimmerman's legal opinion on the method by which it could be distributed, provided the farmers with a reimbursement of slightly more than 60 percent of their costs of supplying unpaid milk to the Scheps operation.

Pa. red meat decreases

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania's commercial red meat production dressed weight basis during August totaled 76.3 million pounds, down 13 percent from August 1983, according to the Pennsylvania Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

Beef slaughter, at 92.4 million pounds liveweight, was down five

percent. Total head slaughtered was 83,600, down three percent, and liveweight averaged 1,106 pounds, a decrease of 21 pounds. Veal slaughter was 4.5 million pounds liveweight, down three percent. Calf slaughter, at 29,900 head, was up four percent, but the average liveweight decreased 11 pounds to 152 pounds.

Hog slaughter at 33.7 million pounds liveweight, was down 24 percent from a year earlier. Total head slaughtered was 140,500, down 26 percent, while average liveweight increased nine pounds to 240 pounds. Lamb and mutton slaughter was 1.7 million pounds liveweight, up 43 percent. The number slaughtered was 17,200, up 38 percent and the average liveweight increased three pounds to 100 pounds.

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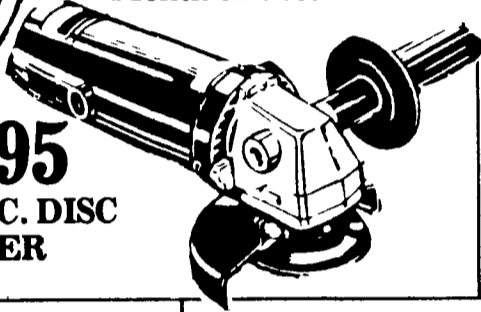
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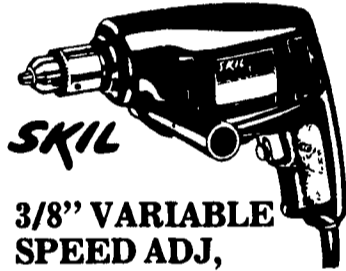
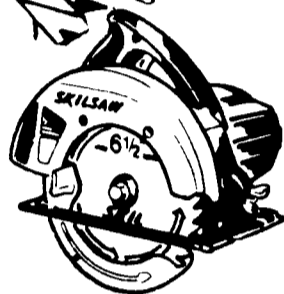
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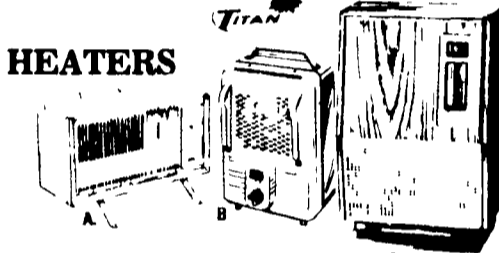
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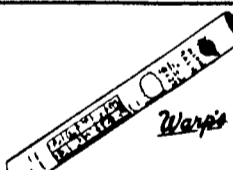


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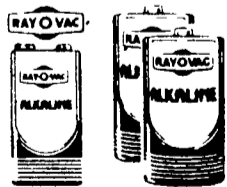
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Inspection of swine extended

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to extend streamlined inspection procedures to all swine slaughtering plants.

If adopted, the procedures would allow plants to increase their production rate because USDA inspectors would need less time to examine each carcass, Houston said.

"This proposal is based on a rule implemented Aug. 4, 1982, which increased productivity by 14.6 percent and reduced overtime costs 50 percent in larger hog slaughter plants while maintaining consumer protection," Houston said.

That rule affected only larger plants requiring three or more inspectors.

The agency has since studied productivity in smaller plants to determine their inspection workload. Houston said the results confirmed that the streamlined procedures would lead to savings across the entire industry.

"The proposal could increase slaughter rates and improve inspection productivity in about 700 swine plants by allowing plants more flexibility in arranging inspection operations to cut down the distance between inspection stations," Houston said.

USDA tested the procedures thoroughly before using them in the larger, high-volume, hog slaughter plants and found them equally as effective as older and more costly procedures.

Comments on the proposal should be sent in duplicate by Nov. 13 to: Regulation Office, attention Annie Johnson, hearing clerk, Food safety and Inspection Service, room 2637-S, Washington D.C. 20250.

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