

# 3. He's still the force behind this fruitful feifdom

familiar face among the crowd of customers, teases a couple of his high-school sales staffers, proudly points out his grandson among the work crew, and zips back to the telephone again, barely pausing for breath.

Joe Raab, at 73, with a mixed life of planting and politics in his blood, could leave younger farmers trailing in the lurch as he plots harvest and sales for the bumper crops of produce, in a year when every grower battled for space in an overflowing, tight market.

"If we farmers could just get together..." he grumbles, leaving the sentence dangling and racing

for the phone to tie up more loose business ends.

Born in Schuylkill Haven, the infant Raab became a York Countian just months later, when his grandfather died and his parents returned home to help manage the family's 39-acre Dallastown general farm.

After finishing ninth grade, Raab left school to help out on the farm, along with taking a \$50-per month job at the neighboring Yoe Orchard Company. With seven years experience in the fruit business, he moved on to a job with a York area manufacturer, while attending night classes at the local

Thompson Business College.

By 1935, the Great Depression's devastation of the farm economy had touched the Raab's home place. Joe, backed by savings from his town job, took over the mortgage on the 39 acres, becoming the fifth generation of the Raab family to till this land that has been acquired - via a goatskin deed - from William Penn's nephew, John Penn.

In the ensuing years, additional land was added to the original purchase; and today's Raab Farm encompasses nearly 140 acres, about 20 of it rented, in near rows of fruit trees and vegetable

production.

From the beginning, Raab was an industry innovator, and became one of the area's first grower to initiate the now-popular "pick your

own" brand of harvest. Customers continue to flock to the busy, attractive market, lured by the quality produce for sale and the (Turn to Page A25)

## Pecks of peppers



Pecks of peppers, not pickled, but shiny green bell types, are maneuvered to the unloading dock by Walter Raab.

## Market shelves stocked full



Sales staffers Gina Joslow, left, and Chris Morrison, help keep market shelves full and wait on customers at the retail center.

SS PHONE PROGRAM \*



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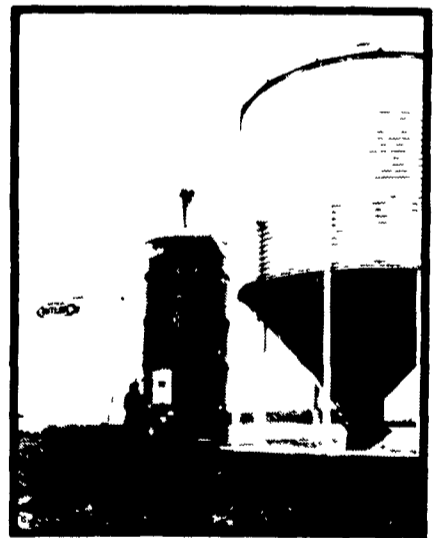
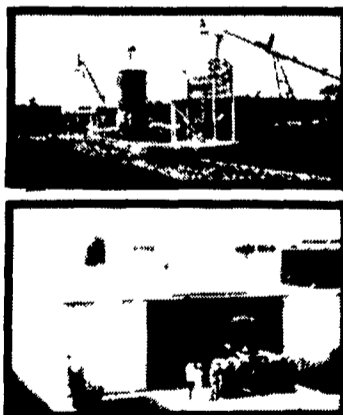
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