#### BY JACK HUBLEY

LANCASTER - Speaking from a podium of alfalfa bales, USDA Secretary of Agriculture John Block addressed a group of Lancaster County farmers last Friday at the poultry farm of the J. Leroy Esbenshade family near Manheim.

Urging voters to reelect a president who, "believes in agriculture," Block cited the dairy diversion program and federal avian influenza assistance as examples of the Reagan administration's commitment to the farming community.

"Do we want to go back to a grain embargo, 21 percent interest rates and high inflation?" Block asked, inferring that such conditions were what a democratic adminstration had to offer.

Referring to the cost of government, Block pointed out that progress has been made under the current administration. "Ronald Reagan came into office and cut the annual increase in government spending from 17½ percent in 1980, to seven percent this past year, he said.

Citing other examples of how farmers have benefitted during the past four years, Block noted that the administration's tax reform has not only reduced personal

## Block stumps for Reagan-Bush on Pa. tour

income taxes, but also modified the inheritance tax formula to allow farmers to pass their land to the next generation with less difficulty.

Block also pointed out that the White House has once again made America the number-one provider of food fiber to the Soviet Union.

"We're looking forward to a great victory," he said, adding that two priorities for a reelected republican administration would be the drafting of a new Farm Bill sensitive to the needs of agriculture, and a reduction in the budget deficit. Block noted that American agriculture serves the world, "and we need to think about it in those terms when writing a Farm Bill.'

Following a brief question and answer session at the Esbenshade farm, Secretary Block, accompanied by State Senator Noah Wenger and Pa. Secretary of Agriculture Penrose Hallowell, traveled to Lancaster's Treadway Resort Inn to attend a Farmers' Rally for Reagan-Bush '84.

The day's itinerary also included visits to the Northampton County farm of David Seiple, near Bath, and finally Luzerne County where Block met with farmers at the Pecora Brothers dairy farm located in Drums.



On hand to welcome USDA Secretary of Agriculture John Block to eastern Pennsylvania on Oct. 26, were (left) State Senator Noah Wenger, Pa. Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Leroy Esbenshade who hosted the tour's first stop at their Manheim-area farm.

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