

Dauphin launches Ag Center fund drive



A \$250,000 fund drive has been officially launched in Dauphin County to build an Agriculture and Natural Resources Center.

The Center, which will contain offices for ag and natural resources agencies, a 400-seat auditorium with kitchen for dinner meetings, two conference rooms and a workshop for hand-on experience, will be located in Middle Paxton Twp. at the northeast corner of the intersection of Rts. 225 and 325, north of Dauphin.

Five acres of land have been donated for the Center and Dauphin County Commissioners have committed a matching \$250,000 for its construction.

A Kick-Off Banquet has officially launched the drive.

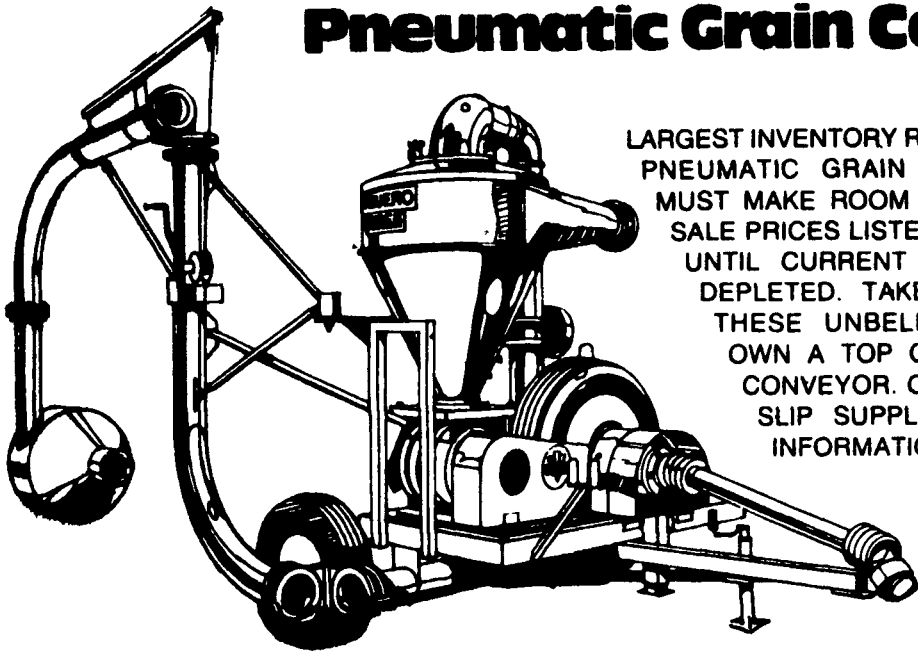
Organizations to be located at the Center will include the County Extension Service, Conservation District, SCS and ASCS.

Interested citizens, businesses and organizations may contact the Extension Service or Conservation District in Dauphin County for more information.

Tax deductible donations to the "D.C.C.D. Ag Center Fund" may be sent to Dauphin county Conservation District, 1205 South 28th St., Harrisburg, Pa. 17111-1095.

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Women in USDA course

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The women come from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. Two of them speak very little English. One works for the U.S. government and another for the United Nations.

Despite differences in language, culture and customs, they all have one thing in common: they are senior-level managers who have ventured into areas long dominated by men — agriculture and rural development.

For several years, USDA's Office of International Cooperation and Development (OICD) has sponsored "Management and the Role of Women in Development," a course for women from developing countries who are already managers and those with strong management potential.

This year the group consisted entirely of high-level managers, according to Mary Rojas, one of course's directors and a professor at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Rojas and the program coordinator, Linda Ayres, administer the course on contract for OICD.

"They come because they want to strengthen their skills in management and learn how to design programs for women's needs," Rojas said.

One such person is Anna Bathily, Senegalese employee of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (AID) mission in her country. Since she is in charge of AID's "Women in Development" program in Senegal, she wanted to share the experiences of other women managers from developing nations and observe the U.S. approach to solving women's problems.

Yamilet Mejia, coordinator of Honduras' National Agrarian Institute for Rural Development, who supervises 300 employees and is the virtual head of the

organization, had similar reasons for taking the course.

According to AID officials, the social changes that have accompanied development resulted in women being pushed into agriculture. However, they say this is not the case in Europe, the U.S. and other developing countries.

AID statistics reveal that in developing countries, women are farmers, doing much of the hard physical labor of agricultural work — but seldom getting credit for it. In Africa, for example, they perform about 60 to 80 percent of all agricultural labor, but rarely receive support from government training programs.

"The OICD management course is designed to fill those gaps," Rojas says. "It is vital that women play a large role in managing rural development organizations and that nations consider women in their development plans and programs."

The six-week course concentrates on developing management skills in leadership, public speaking, stress and time management, and proposal writing.

An important segment of the course allows the women to follow other agricultural managers and observe first-hand how they go about their daily work routine. That may involve following an extension worker in Blacksburg, Va., for instance, or another neighboring community. Course participants gain some idea of how USDA agriculturalists help American farmers.

