

## PennMar to discuss purchase of Shamokin Packing

SHAMOKIN — Central Pennsylvania hog and beef producers are invited to learn about the PennMar Cooperative's plan to take over the Shamokin Packing Company and expand its marketing opportunities.

Eugene Eisenbise of Hershey, president of PennMar Cooperative said, "We're looking for hog and

beef producers who wish to join our efforts to improve the potential for profitable marketing in Pennsylvania. We're ready to go ahead with plans to purchase the plant and install further-processing equipment to go after the ready-to-eat markets. We've already obtained an option to buy, and have had the plant appraised. We've

also adopted a pro forma budget." Eisenbise said the plant presently slaughters about 500 hogs a day and 20 beef animals. Utilities and zoning are in good shape, he added. "The project is ready to go. All we need is support from producers who are willing to make a commitment to improve markets," Eisenbise said.

Marlin Miller, manager of the

Pennsylvania Farmers Association's marketing cooperative PACMA, which is assisting PennMar, will conduct the meeting. "With the demise of several major packing plants over the past few years, it's important for farmers to join together to strengthen and improve the red meat industry here in Pennsylvania," he said.

The PennMar meetings will take place as follows: May 23, 7 p.m. at the Dutch Pantry, Selinsgrove; May 29, 7 p.m. at the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster; May 30, 7 p.m. at the York 4-H Center, York.

For more information contact Marlin Miller at 717-761-2740 or Eugene Eisenbise at 717-367-4498.

## Congressional hearing

(Continued from Page A1)

tinue to deteriorate, many of these solid farmers will eventually have a credit crisis," Maryland National Bank Vice President Robert Miller said, summarizing the thoughts of most of the witnesses.

Although Farmers Home Administration has not had any foreclosures over the past few years, because of administration rulings, "there will be when we have the authority," said Caulk.

Congresswoman Byron asked the lenders if they thought the downward spiral in land values had halted in the Maryland-Pennsylvania area. The witnesses agreed, in fact, that it probably had not.

"Not since the 1930s have we seen such a dramatic and prolonged period of decline in farmland values," Gene L. Swackhammer, president of the Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore,


said in his prepared statement. "Nationwide, using 1967 constant dollars, the value of farm assets declined by almost \$80 billion (over the past four years) by the beginning of this year and we are aware of no one who is predicting that, if left unaddressed, this trend will reverse itself in the near future."

Added Miller: "I don't believe land values have hit bottom yet."

Virtually all the witnesses who addressed the soil conservation topic spoke out in favor of the Soil Conservation Service's efforts.

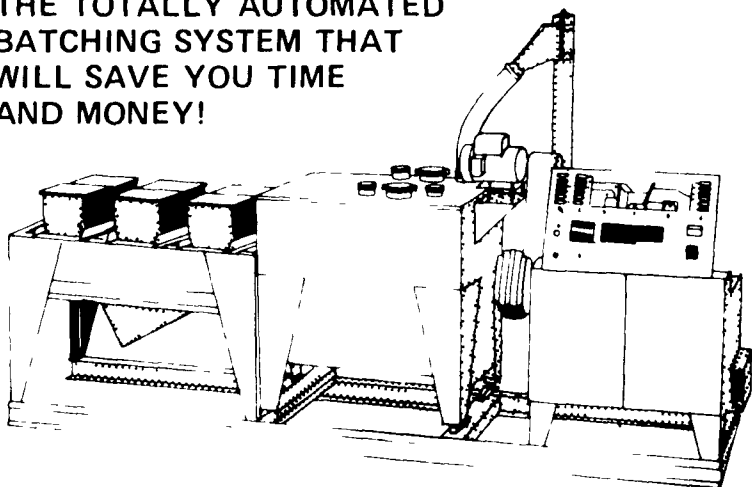
Jones himself, set the tone in his opening statement, observing, "I can promise you here and now that any budget proposal to destroy the Soil Conservation Service is dead as a hammer, and I'll fight with all my will to see that this nation does not turn backwards on the progress we've made since the days of the Dust Bowl."

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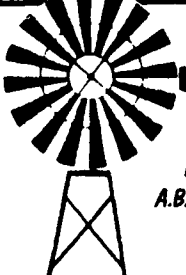
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