

Manheim Farm Show erects new swine, sheep facility

BY JACK HUBLEY

MANHEIM — When the last nail is driven, the Manheim Farm Show grounds will have Lancaster County's only permanent sheep and hog barn with penning facilities and an indoor showing.

Farm Show Commission president Luke Burkhardt cites the high cost of tent rentals as one reason for building the new 60-by-120-foot building. Burkhardt notes that, in years past, the Farm Show spent about \$2,000 a year to rent tents large enough to house the shows, and this did not include the cost of wiring.

"Tents don't come cheap, and once you put them up, there's no guarantee they're going to stay up, either," Burkhardt adds.

Though the fairgrounds has two permanent structures, one is used as a dairy and beef barn, while the other houses crafts, produce and commercial exhibits, says building chairman Marlin Becker.

Becker notes that the popularity of Manheim's swine and sheep events justifies the construction of permanent facilities. With about 100 hogs exhibited, Manheim hosts the county's largest hog show, says Becker. And, with registrations

averaging 125 head, the farm show also hosts one of the county's larger sheep events, he said.

"This is strictly a farm show, not a fair," Becker points out, adding that the accent is on rural activities. No "concession-type" stands are permitted at the Manheim Farm Show. "We found out that this really helps keep the discipline problems down," he said.

The building, complete with concrete floor, will probably be finished by Sept. 1, in plenty of

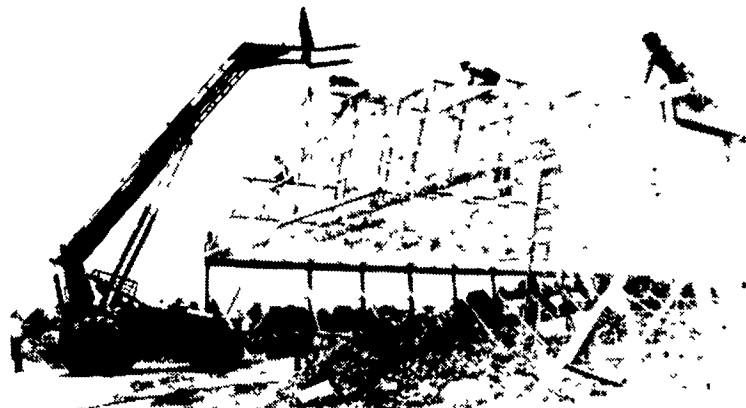
time for the farm show's Oct. 7, opening date. The \$50,000 cost will be covered primarily by proceeds from the farm show's annual benefit sale held during the spring. Last year's sale grossed more than \$19,000, leaving the commission with a \$7,000 net profit, says Becker.

The building chairman expects that rental charges for other events will also help to defray construction and maintenance costs. Those interested in holding consignment or production sales, youth activities or other events in

the new building should contact the Manheim Borough Office.

Becker emphasizes that much of the labor needed to erect the new facility is donated. Local builders providing free manpower include Bob Wolgemuth and Steigel Builders. Ronald Rohrer serves as the project's contractor.

Of the 16 workmen on the job the day that the accompanying photo was taken, only three were being paid. "It's great to see the community get behind a project like this," Becker concluded.



Starting at 7 a.m., workers had the last truss in place on the Manheim Farm Show's new swine and sheep building by 11 o'clock.

Grange urges poultry help

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania State Grange and the National Grange are supporting legislation in Congress which would extend payment protection under the Packers and Stockyards Act to poultry and eggs.

A bill recently introduced in the U.S. House by Pennsylvania Congressman George Gekas (R-17) would provide the same full payment protection to poultry producers as is currently in force for the red meat industry. In particular, the legislation requires poultry processors and handlers to pay producers promptly and sets up trust provisions for the poultry industry.

The Packers and Stockyards Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, would have administrative authority to enforce the provisions of the bill. An identical bill is expected to be introduced in the Senate.

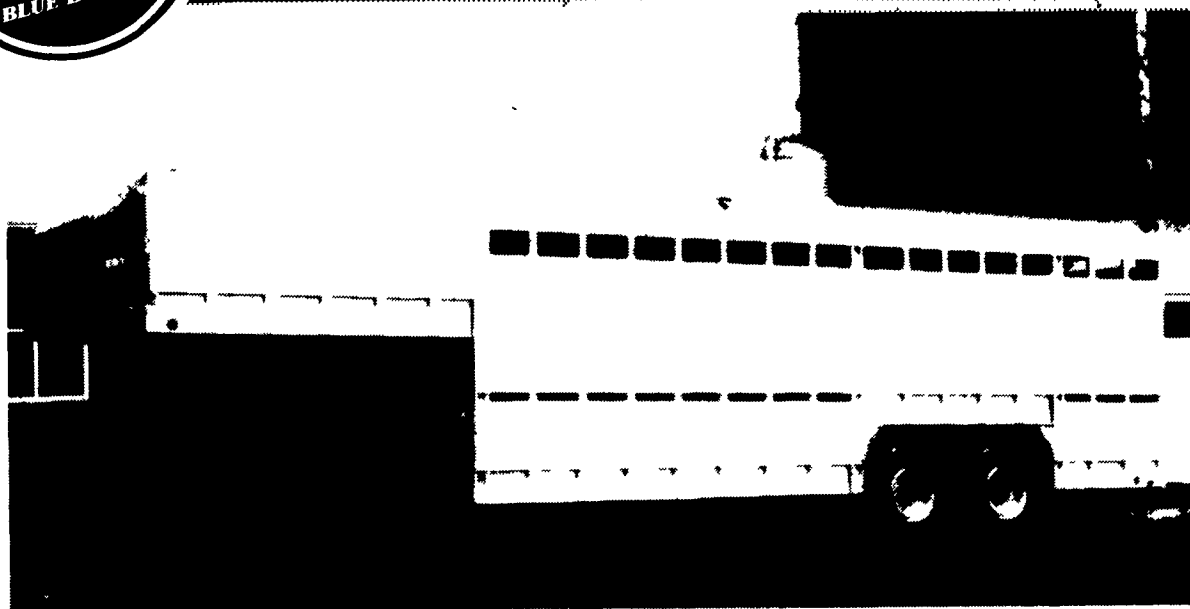
State Master Charles Wismer said, "The 1983 bankruptcy of Mandata Poultry in central Pennsylvania and similar bankruptcies in other states have pointed to the need to provide payment protection for poultry farmers. The State Grange, working in conjunction with the National Grange, started the ball rolling for such legislation to be introduced."

He added, "It's too late for the farmers who lost out in the Mandata bankruptcy. A few of them are in danger of losing their farms as a result of the losses they sustained."

Organizations in other poultry states with similar problems are following suit in support of the bill, Wismer said.

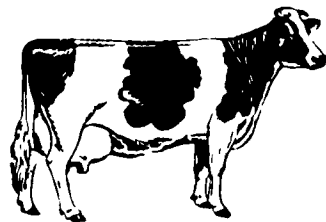
The State Grange is also working on the state level to pass a state law mandating payment in 21 days to poultry farmers. The legislation has passed the House and is awaiting Senate Agriculture Committee action on the legislators' return from summer recess.

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