

Lancaster Farming

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York Drought Damages Trigger Disaster Status

BY JOYCE BUPP

York County Correspondent

YORK — York County's Food and Agricultural Committee met Thursday morning and drew up recommendations to have the county declared a disaster area.

A severe drought since April has parched York County's farming soils, hitting heaviest in the agriculture-intense southern half of the county.

Officials of the Extension Service, Farmers Home Administration, Soil Conservation Service and Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service made the disaster status recommendation after tabulating anticipated crop losses for the county.

Declaration of disaster status for the county would make available low interest money to "eligible" farmers. Emergency feedstuffs could also possibly be made available and set-aside acreage opened for grazing purposes.

According to York County Agent Tony Dobrosky, any county that can show a 30 percent total loss of crops will be designated a disaster area by federal officials.

A \$47 million tab is being placed on York crop losses for about 70 percent of the county's normal \$66 million field crop production. That estimate doesn't touch the additional \$85 million generated by dairy, poultry and livestock, also likely to be affected by reduced yields of feed supplies.

Corn and corn silage yields are expected to tally the greatest losses estimated at \$24 million. Alfalfa hay loss is anticipated to run \$6.4 million. Vegetable losses are pegged at \$3.5 million, soybean loss at \$3.2 million, potatoes at \$2.6 million, fruits at \$2.5 million, and mixed hay at \$1.7 million.

York County Commissioners will forward the disaster recom-

mendation to the state Food and Agricultural committee. Their affirmation will in turn move the request to the Federal Government via USDA.

"We're looking for an answer in four to eight weeks," says Dobrosky. "That's about the time the real need will start to tell — in September."

The York County disaster recommendation comes on the heels of disaster status application for 19 of Maryland's 23 counties.

"Maryland is anticipating crop losses approaching \$100 million or 9 percent of the total commodity production in the state," says Robert Walker, executive assistant to Maryland's Secretary of Agriculture, Wayne Cawley.

Corn also topped the loss list in Maryland with estimate of only a quarter of the normal yield. Corn grain alone earned \$116 million for Maryland farmers in 1984.

Maryland's \$73 million soybean crop is also slated for severe losses. Greenhouse and nursery production is the third high ag

(Turn to Page A30)

Irish Dairy Continues Plan

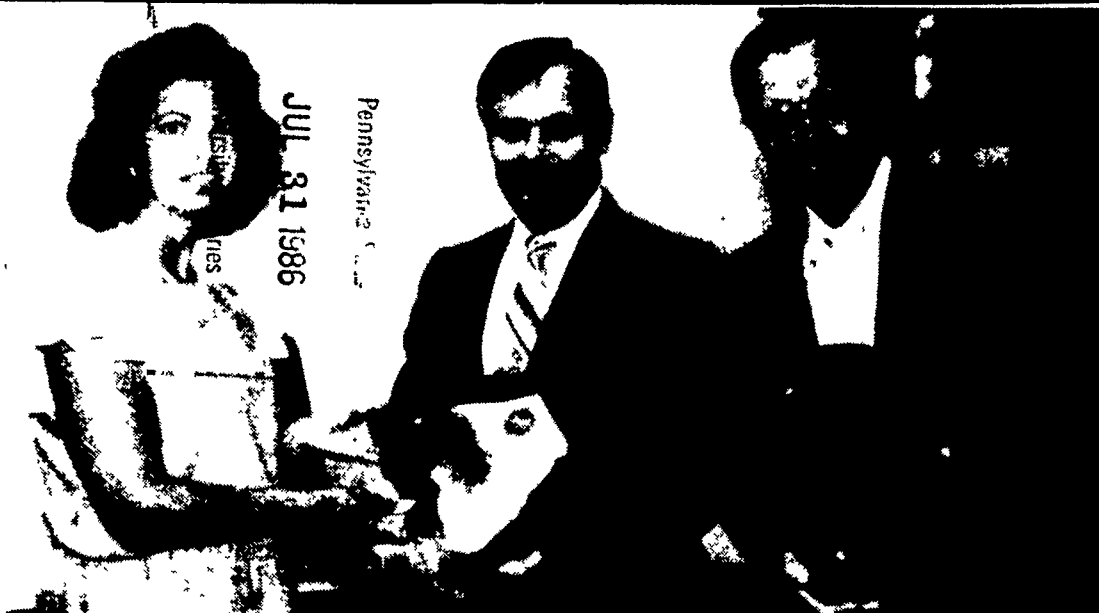
BY MARTHA J. GEHRINGER

MONTEZUMA, Ga. — Masstock International Dairy Corporation recently announced its plans to proceed with original intentions of building a dairy in southern Georgia, without benefit of tax exempt industrial development bonds.

These bonds, controlled by the federal government, are low-interest rate bonds that have tax-sheltering possibilities.

Last week reports indicated the dairy would not be built in

(Turn to Page A32)



The Lancaster County Extension Service directors presented a 25-year service plaque to Lancaster County agricultural agents. Arnold Lueck (right), and Glenn Shirk Monday evening. Lilli Ann Kopp, Board President, made the presentations at the directors summer dinner meeting at Country Table Restaurant in Mount Joy. The plaques were presented in appreciation for the agents' contribution to agriculture and the local community.

Woodlands May Ease Manure Glut

BY JACK HUBLEY

LEBANON — Those of us with chronic holes in our wallets often rationalize that money, like manure, does little good unless it's spread around. That's where the similarity ends, though.

Unlike cash, manure generates little interest when stockpiled. And few farmers in southeastern Pennsylvania would argue that it's a whole lot easier to generate too much manure than too much cash these days.

The manure situation is big news in the southeastern area, where nutrient enrichment problems in the Chesapeake Bay have been traced upriver to Pennsylvania farmers in the Susquehanna River watershed. But not all water quality problems generated by a concentrated animal agriculture are exported to the bay. Elevated nitrate levels in increasing numbers of rural groundwater supplies reveal that soil is laboring

under a heavy nutrient load. With cheap grain and favorable hog and poultry prices threatening to trigger further expansion, the trend isn't likely to reverse itself.

In Lancaster County, Extension director Jay Irwin calculates that farmers should have nearly 70,000 more cropland acres than are available to spread the county's manure supply at recommended rates. Trucking this excess to cropland in need of fertilizer is

impractical, notes Irwin, due to high transportation costs and the relatively low cash value of the nutrients contained in a ton of manure. The Extension director pegs the plant food value of a ton of dairy manure straight from the cow at about \$3, while hog and poultry manure may be worth about \$4 and \$10.80, respectively. In slurry form, however, the value of the nitrogen, potassium and

(Turn to Page A28)

Keystone Vo-Ag Teachers Convene In State College

BY SUZANNE KEENE

UNIVERSITY PARK — Vocational agriculture teachers must educate high school counselors and the community about opportunities available to vo-ag students, the past president of the American Vocational Association told educators this week.

Speaking to about 145 vo-ag teachers at the Pennsylvania Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association Professional Technical Education Institute at Penn State University Tuesday evening, Rosemary Kolde urged the instructors to help dispel the belief that vo-ag programs prepare students only for production agriculture.

"Vocational education is the backbone of this nation's training and retraining. We have to let others know how important vocational education is," she stressed.

Dr. Lamartine Hood, dean of the Penn State college of agriculture, joined Kolde in her plea to educate the community. We have to work together to broaden vocational agriculture's image, he said.

"Ag is in a new era, just like other vocations," Kolde said. Exciting developments in biotechnology and market

development are changing the face of agriculture and the skills needed in the ag workforce.

Because of the rapid change in technology, a job is no longer a career, Kolde said. Workers must continually receive training to stay abreast of technological advances.

Therefore, Kolde said, vocational teachers should prepare students not only to enter a job, but for lifelong learning as well.

Vocational education has an important place in the school system, she reminded the teachers. "The largest segment of the U.S. workforce is made up of employees who haven't attended a college."

Kolde encouraged the teachers in their mission of preparing the future workforce. "What we as teachers teach to our students is what they will become. If we tell them they will be a success, they will succeed," she said.

"The best teachers," Kolde stressed, "bring a care and a concern for their students to the classroom."

A few of those top teachers received recognition from their peers during the three-day Institute. Members of the PVATA

(Turn to Page A39)



Irrigation in Lancaster County this week along North View Road off Rt. 772 East of Manheim. Rains later in the week helped crops but more rain is needed.