

# Wolff Says Casey Budget Offers Rural Economic Growth

HARRISBURG — Agriculture Secretary Boyd E. Wolff today said Gov. Robert P. Casey's proposed state budget "offers rural Pennsylvania and agriculture a long-awaited opportunity to achieve meaningful economic growth."

Case proposes a \$39.3 million general fund budget for the Department of Agriculture, a nearly seven percent increase that includes a new \$3 million appropriation "targeted for

economic expansion," Wolff noted.

"The governor clearly has set his sights on accomplishing an economic turn around in rural Pennsylvania and stimulating growth for our Commonwealth's leading industry," Wolff said. "With cooperation from industry leaders, the Department will help him realize those critical goals."

Casey noted agriculture's important role in achieving the

economic revitalization objectives of his administration in remarks accompanying presentation of his \$10.2 billion state General Fund budget to a joint session of the General Assembly.

Saying he recognized that "the agricultural community must be a full partner in Pennsylvania's economic development," Casey requested \$3 million "for new initiatives to support the expansion of our agricultural industry..."

Casey also requested \$5 million for the Penn State Agriculture Extension Service, a vital component of state-supported services provided rural Pennsylvania.

"We're pleased that the governor has provided us significant funding to undertake initiatives critical to agriculture's future and that he has allowed flexibility in use of the funds to achieve maximum benefits,"

Wolff said.

Wolff announced that planning already is underway by the Department to implement an economic recovery plan for agriculture and that "options for the best use of the funds" would be discussed with agricultural leaders statewide. "We want a workable plan that will yield positive results as quickly as possible."

Other elements of the Department's proposed budget that will impact favorably on agribusinesses, product development and sales include \$2.75 million for Pennsylvania fairs; \$1 million to the Farm Products Show Fund; \$210,000 for livestock, open and junior dairy and 4-H shows; and \$360,000 for agricultural promotions.

Other budget appropriations include \$1 million, agricultural research; \$150,000, brucellosis vaccination program; \$300,000, rabies research; \$378,000, livestock and poultry diagnostic work; \$350,000, field investigations and poultry surveillance program; \$115,000, Johne's disease research; and \$350,000, animal indemnities.

## Feed Grain Program Aimed At Reducing Crop Acreage

LEESPORT — Since feed grain carryover stocks are expected to remain large at the end of the season, Donald E. Lutz, of the Berks County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, says farmers may want to study the benefits of the 1987 Feed Grain Acreage Reduction Program to their farming operation. The signup period is open now through March 30.

In an effort to reduce planted acreage, production, and total supplies to a level more in line with demand, the feed grain program contains a 20 percent acreage reduction requirement and an optional 15 percent paid land diversion. Farmers may request 40 percent of their projected 1987 deficiency payments and 50 percent of their diversion payment at signup, according to Mr. Lutz.

"One-half of the advance deficiency and diversion payments will be issued in cash and the remainder will be paid in generic commodity certificates," Mr. Lutz said.

USDA estimates that per bushel deficiency payment rates will be \$1.21 for corn, \$1.14 for sorghum, \$1.11 for barley and \$.55 for oats. Diversion payment rates are: corn, \$2; sorghum, \$1.90; barley, \$1.60; and oats, \$.80.

Farmers who participate in the 1987 Feed Grain Program will be eligible for the same target price

protection as in 1986 — \$3.03 per bushel for corn, \$2.88 for sorghum, \$2.60 for barley and \$1.60 for oats. They are also eligible for price support loans at \$1.82 per bushel for corn, \$1.74 for sorghum, \$1.49 for barley, \$.94 for oats and \$1.55 per bushel for rye.

Mr. Lutz said feed grain program participants will be eligible to earn deficiency payments on the acres planted within the permitted acreage, the same as in 1986. Producers who plant at least 50 percent of the permitted acreage to a program crop and devote the remaining

permitted acreage to a conserving use will be eligible to receive deficiency payments on 92 percent of the permitted acreage. "Production of alternate crops on acreage conservation reserve land will not be permitted," said Mr. Lutz, "and grazing will be permitted after May 31, 1987."

To be eligible to participate in the program for one crop on the farm, the ASCS official said producers will be required to plant within the crop acreage base for each other program crop on the farm, except for oats (ask at the ASCS office for details). Cross

compliance was not a requirement under the 1986 program.

Further details of the 1987 feed grain and wheat acreage reduction and land diversion programs are available from county ASCS offices.

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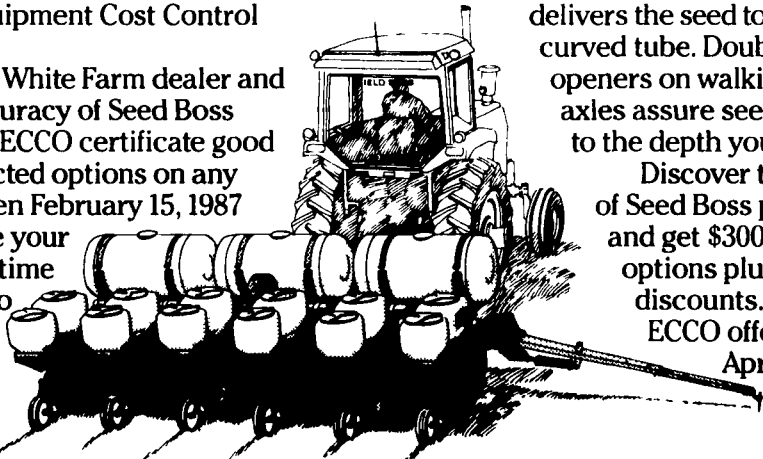
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