

PFA Members Take Legislative Agenda To State Lawmakers

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create an animal health commission to oversee and coordinate animal disease eradication and disease prevention and research programs. Eckel congratulated the House Ag Committee for reporting out the proposal (H.B. 441).

Citing depopulations in poultry, swine and dairy herds because of disease, Eckel urged an increase in public spending on animal health, diagnostic and indemnity programs as well.

"The animal health commission is long overdue. It will provide ongoing stability for the direction of animal health programs by insulating it from political pressures," he said.

Eckel also pushed for support for House Bill 62, legislation which would give farmers more authority over commodity promotion programs. "We strongly believe that the amendments contained in House Bill 62 would provide the necessary teeth in the law to give the commodity people the power to hire personnel, enact marketing contracts and have general authority over business matters as they relate to the promotion and marketing of their products," he said.

Noting the success of the dairy promotion programs, Eckel said, "That type of plan does work and works well."

"We need the same type of promotion in Pennsylvania," he added.

Eckel said PFA supports Ag Secretary Boyd Wolff's proposal to include \$3 million in the department budget to create new programs to support and expand ag industry in Pennsylvania. The largest part of the funds would be used to establish a basic data bank about the state's ag production capacity.

Information in the bank would include soil types and production capabilities, availability of the

rural labor force for industry interested in expansion, transportation facilities and geographical information necessary for developing farms and agribusinesses.

"It would help us meet the competitive business of attracting new business and jobs to Pennsylvania," Eckel said.

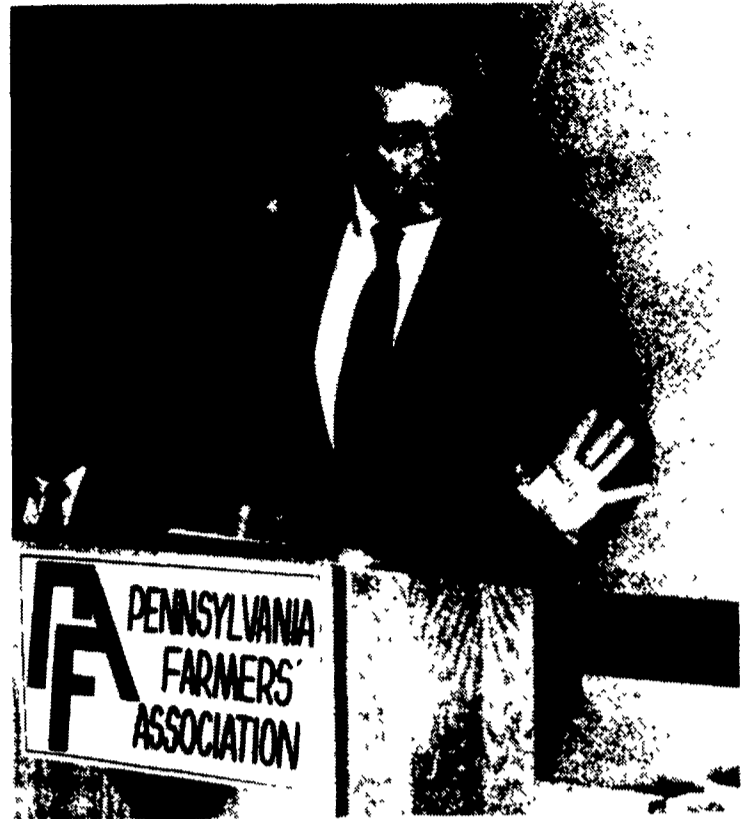
With nods of agreement from farmers in the audience, Eckel

asked legislators to pass a bill placing a deposit on bottles and cans. At issue, he said, is the economic viability of Pennsylvania farmers.

Eckel cited instances of farm animals dying after ingesting shredded aluminum cans in their feed. "It's time to call a halt to using farmland as a dumping ground for bottles and cans," he said.



PFA vice president D. Eugene Gayman, left, presents the PFA Barn Raiser Award to Dr. Robert Marshak, dean of the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine.



PFA president Keith Eckel encourages legislators to support agriculture during the farm organization's annual legislative banquet.

Guys and Dolls

4-H Club

The Lampeter Strasburg Guys and Dolls 4-H Club met recently for a Fun Night. Members watched the video "Annie" and made ice cream sundaes.

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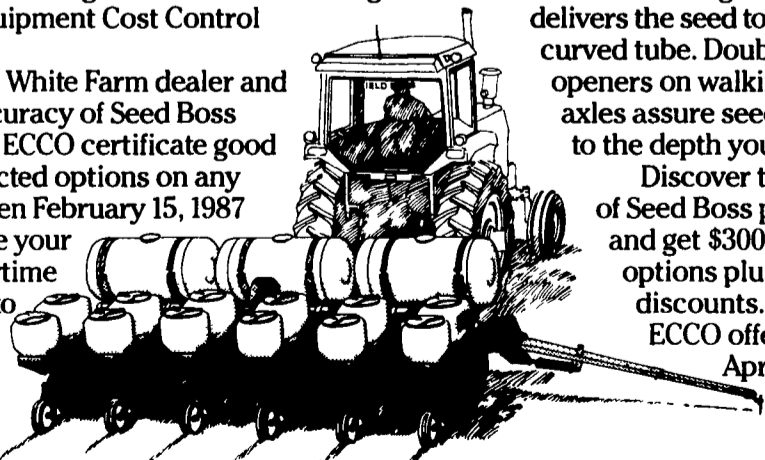
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