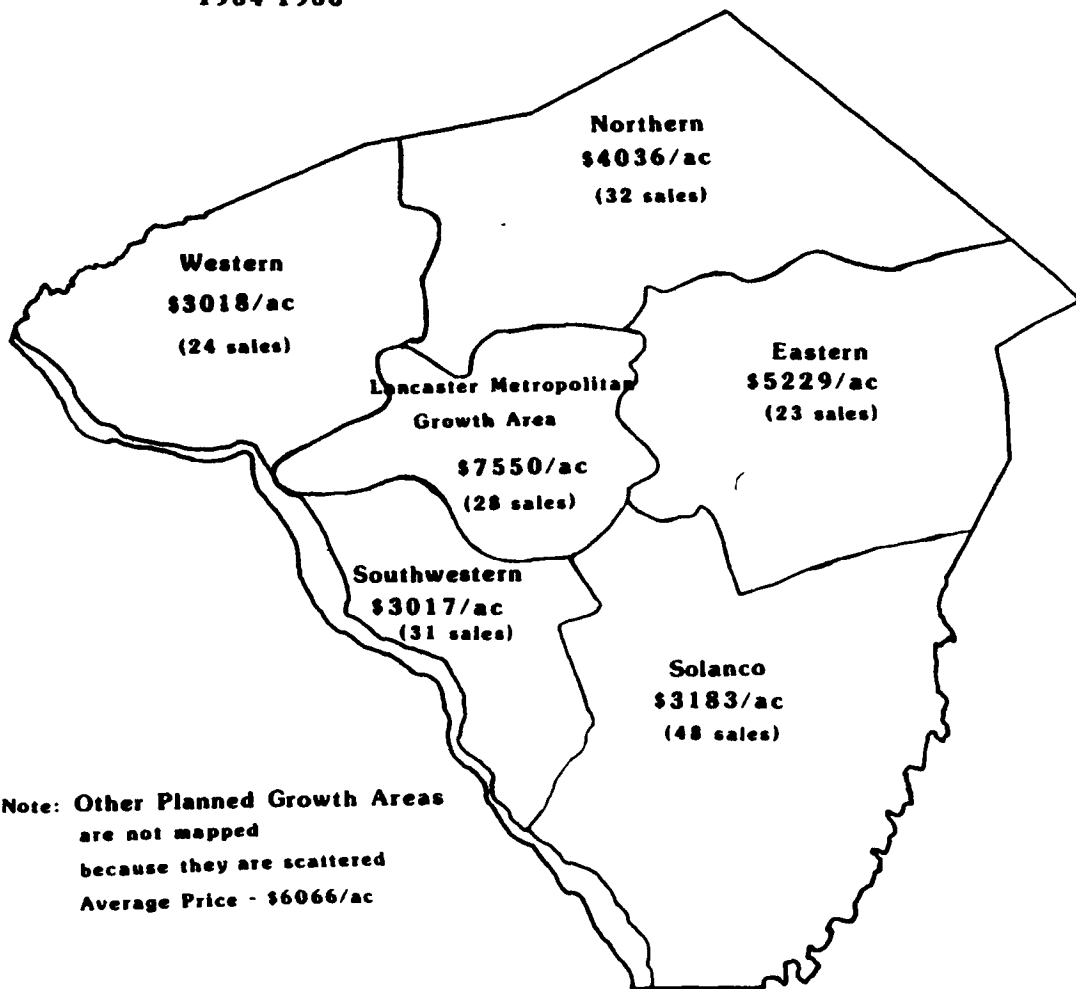


FARM SALES

Average Price per Acre By Region

1984-1986



Preserve Restrictions

(Continued from Page A1)

that will continue in agriculture is in the eastern part of the county where Amish and old order Mennonite farmers have pushed the average price for an acre of farm land to \$5,229.

Amos Funk, chairman of the preserve board, said that the report shows that as ag preservationists, we have been active to preserve ag land from development pressure. What we now see is that when that is done, zoning and deed restrictions do not reduce the price of farm land. If we're to try to work ag preservation and active growth areas around the metropolitan areas, then there would be a major difference. Farm land protected by what the preserve board considers affective agricultural zoning sold for an average \$3,523 per acre. One dollar above the average for all farm land.

With the report, Musselman says the job of preserving farm land may be a little easier than many people thought. "It's now shown that to make a commitment by an individual land owner for restrictions or allowing their land to be included in a protected area does not significantly reduce the farm land values for farming. That was one of the greatest concerns of

a lot of land owners who were considering preserving their land for agriculture. The signs are positive in these farm land value comparisons that the market place recognizes the value of ag land that is protected for the long term. The combination of comprehensive planning at the municipal and county level, effective ag zoning, ag preserves and permanent deed restrictions are all starting to have an affect on guiding growth and development. The growth is more and more concentrated into areas where it's planned for and where it can be best accommodated," Musselman said.

"I believe in addition to all these individual features there is a psychological factor in the market place. Developers are less and less willing to go out and buy a farm in a good farm area at a public auction. We have now found several farms sold farmer to investor that are just setting there for long-term or are being returned from investor to farmer. In addition, the water-quality factor has also entered the picture," Musselman said. "With DER the crackdown on massive subdivisions with septic systems has reduced interest in farm land areas not able to accommodate the added possible water-quality problem."

RCMA Becomes A Reality

BY ARDEN TEWKSBURY
Member Penna. R.C.M.A.
Steering Committee

After two and 1/2 years of hard work by scores of volunteer farmers and after hundreds of meetings across the North Eastern part of the United States; it now appears the Regional Co-operative Marketing Agency (R.C.M.A.) is zeroing in on their goal of signing up 95% of all dairy farmers on the East Coast.

Once a sufficient percentage of dairy farmers are brought into the fold, then R.C.M.A. will be able to proceed with bargaining for higher prices on fluid milk for all R.C.M.A. members.

It appears that all the States involved with the R.C.M.A. program has attained a sufficient

percentage of dairy farmers signed up except Pennsylvania. What a disappointment it will be if nearly 35,000 dairy farmers are denied the chance to recoup some of their declining milk prices simply because we fail to sign up the remaining 1700 independent dairy farmers in Pennsylvania that are needed to achieve R.C.M.A. goals.

Background

Some of us attended an R.C.M.A. meeting in Albany, New York during February of 1985. At this meeting the new program of R.C.M.A. was explained to the major farm leaders from the Northeast.

As a result of the Albany meeting the Pa. Farmers Union and the Pa. State Grange immediately started

explaining the R.C.M.A. concept to the major farm papers in Pennsylvania.

Information meetings were held in many of the counties in Penna. explaining the program. While many of the dairy farmers supported the R.C.M.A. approach many farmers appeared to be hesitant to sign a contract, because not all general farm organizations were publicly endorsing R.C.M.A., and some of the major Dairy Co-operatives were not members at that time.

Needless to say, precious time was lost due to the lack of some organizations support.

However, by July, 1986 all farm organizations in Penna. were supporting R.C.M.A. and all the major dairy co-operatives were

members of the bargaining agency.

At the same time a six man steering committee was appointed to direct the "R.C.M.A. sign up" in Penna.

Harold Wolfe of Centre Hill joins me in representing Pa. Farmers Union, Karl Kroeck of Knoxville and Carl Brown of Pine Grove represented the Pa. Farmers Association. Robert Pardoe of Milton and Edwin Kremer represented the Pa. State Grange. In November of 1986 Donald Duncan of Berks County replaced Mr. Kremer.

As R.C.M.A. expanded into additional counties three more dairy farmers were added to the steering committee. Ken Mumford, from Franklin County was appointed by P.F.A., Willis Greaser by P.F.U. from Blair County and the State Grange appointed Horace Prange from Cochranville, PA.

All of these dairymen deserve much credit for their efforts up to this point.

However, the real credit for signing up the independent producers belong to the scores of volunteer dairy farmers working in all of our counties. Without their efforts the R.C.M.A. program would still be in the talking stage.

However, even with all the efforts by so many people we still need hundreds of independent producers signed up with R.C.M.A.

All Dairy Farmers Being Called To Help

It is now evident that we need all interested dairy farmers; Co-op dairy men and Non Co-op dairy farmers to work on the project.

The Pa. Steering Committee of R.C.M.A. is asking all dairy farmers to become involved in this project.

If you are a member of R.C.M.A. then you should be actively talking to your neighbors about R.C.M.A.

You, the dairy farmers, should be explaining to your neighbors that there are no dues in R.C.M.A.

Explain to your fellow dairy farmers that the By-Laws of R.C.M.A. prevents any assessment on either dairy farmers or dairy co-operatives.

Explain to them that R.C.M.A.

has no intention of marketing one pound of milk and every dairyman will have the responsibility to market their milk through their own handlers.

Two Cardinal Rules

Everyone must understand that R.C.M.A. has two cardinal rules.

1. Every fluid milk handler will be charged the same over order price.

2. Every dairy farmer belonging to R.C.M.A. will receive the same premium price.

Time Is Of Essence

Time is running out on us in Penna.; we must immediately accelerate our efforts if we are going to obtain a realistic price for our milk.

While R.C.M.A. has not announced when they will start setting over order prices, I can envision this being done by R.C.M.A.'s Board by July of 1987.

It appears to me the net gross blend price paid to Order 2 dairy farmers for the month of July, 1987 will be about even with the July, 1986 price.

The price gains we realized in the fall of 1986 and the winter of 1987; (basically as a result of the whole herd buyout program) have now vanished because of lower Class prices on all milk.

In July of 1981 area dairy farmers received \$13.33 per cwt. for their milk. Years later our net gross price will be nearly \$2.00 per cwt. less than 1981. Is it any wonder that more dairy farmers are being forced out of business?

Enough Is Enough

I think it's time for all dairy farmers and farm organizations to say "Enough, Enough".

During the last six years the average dairy farmer has paid over \$10,000 in government assessments or higher transportation cost to solve the "milk problem". Dairy farmers reward for all of these payments is a 20% reduction in his blend and prices.

It's time we as dairy farmers take hold of the reins of our destiny. It's we all get behind the efforts of R.C.M.A. Remember, "Enough is Enough."

Contact Any Of The Following:
Pa. Farmers Union 1-800-932-4629;
Pa. State Grange 1-800-242-9661;
Pa. Farmers Association 717-761-2740; Ed Anna - R.C.M.A. 716-344-1463; Harold Ely - Pa. Coordinator R.C.M.A. 717-278-1259.

Maryland-Delaware Brown Swiss Assoc. Elect Officers



Newly elected officers of the Maryland-Delaware Brown Swiss Association are: from left, Curtis Baughman, vice president; Richard Black, treasurer; Madeline Valentine, secretary; George Bassler, president; Lee Bassler, director; Webber Bell, director; and Arthur Litton, director.