

School District Plans Acreage Increase

Octorara Area School District made plans last week to nearly triple its acreage on the boundary of West Fallowfield and Highland Townships. The school board voted unanimously to buy the 103-acre Naaman King farm across Highland Road from the school campus.

"The farm is not for sale," Naaman King declared.

Dr. Richard McAdams, district superintendent, said the school directors have been discussing expansion since last October. Fifteen acres are required immediately for athletic fields, necessitated by the establishment of an intermediate-level interscholastic program last spring. In addition, given Chester County's westward development frenzy, need for a new elementary school is anticipated within two years, according to McAdams.

"We had no choice but to con-

sider taking farmland," McAdams said. "We are surrounded by farms." The superintendent stated that the school board feels strongly that all the district's schools should be on one campus, as they have been since 1980.

Of the four farms adjoining school property that the directors considered, according to McAdams, the King farm is the only one where the family would not have to be relocated if the land is taken over by the school district. King lives on another farm and rotates crops of potatoes, corn, wheat, soybeans and buckwheat on the 103 acres in question.

However, in 1984, King sold the house, barn and 10 acres of the Highland Road farm to his son and daughter-in-law, Lowell and Joyce, with first option to purchase the remainder of the farm. Lowell presently works in the trucking indus-



Naaman King harvests potatoes on his 103-acre farm, which the Octorara Area School District wishes to buy to triple its acreage.

try, but, would like to return to farming says his father. "What will he do with a big barn and no land?" King asked.

King's wife Marian, said that McAdams approached her husband last March about eight acres for athletic fields. "I first said no," King explained, "and then thought, I don't want to be a meany. So I offered them 15 acres along Highland Road through a realtor. They

never got back to the realtor, and now they want to take my whole farm."

"It's very traumatic," said Marian King.

King allots 160 acres to potatoes on the several parcels of land he farms in West Fallowfield Township. He said fewer acres will prevent him from rotating the potato crop every three years as Penn State recommends. "I'm not trying

to buy more land," King stated. "I'm just trying to keep what we have and keep our sons in agriculture."

King has until October 12 to respond to the board's offer, the amount which neither he nor school officials have disclosed. If the two parties can't come to terms, the Octorara district may take the land by eminent domain, according to state law.



King's farm is located across Highland Road from the Octorara School campus. The school board plans to use the land for athletic fields and perhaps an elementary school.

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