

Wenger Discusses Development Easements At Seminar

BY LISA RISSER

PRESCOTT — The state of Pennsylvania has the authority, given to it by its voters, to use state funds to purchase development easements on prime farmland, Pennsylvania Senator Noah Wenger told Lebanon County farmers last week.

"Now we need to pass enabling legislature to get the program going," he added.

Addressing attendees at the ag luncheon seminar sponsored by the Lebanon Valley National Bank, Wenger said the state governing bodies are considering legislation that would allocate funds to counties based on a formula. One method involves distributing monies based on the amount of farmland changing hands within a county. "We want the bulk of the money to go where prime farmland is being sold," Wenger declared.

The second plan deals with proportioning the money based on the amount of agriculture within a county.

Asked if he thought the monetary amount indicated on the passed referendum would be sufficient, Wenger replied, "It is enough for us to see if the program will work." From that point, the state would develop a full-scale program.

The amount a county would pay for a development easement is fig-

ured by subtracting the land's appraised farm value from its appraised development value. The county will not be able to pay more than the difference between the values for the easement right if using state funds.

Wenger advised farmers to carefully consider their desires before deciding whether or not to sell their land's easement rights. One reason someone might wish to sell those rights is if he or she had no heirs and wanted the land to stay agricultural. Another reason is to get cash to pay a debt or to have cash to leave to heirs who would not inherit the farm.

Funds for the state program won't be available until the end of this year or the start of 1989, Wenger said.

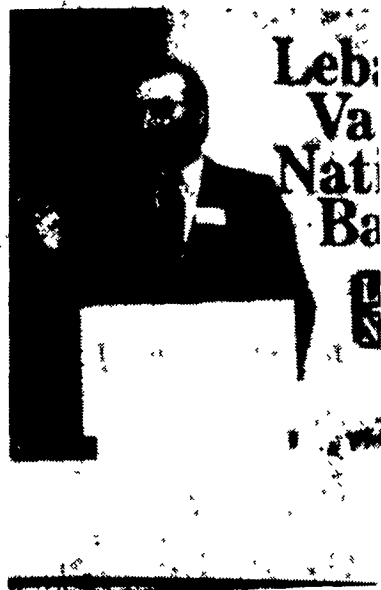
Agricultural legislation

"The public is demanding that there be no sulfa residue in hogs going to market," Karen Darling, deputy assistant secretary of marketing and inspection services, USDA, told farmers. "There is a trace-back system to find out who produced the hog with the residue. The system pertains only to hogs now but they're gearing up for beef. Also legislation has been proposed for checking fish, which is a little extreme. How are we going to do that?"

The industry is making great strides in genetics research with plants to eradicate diseases, Darling reported. Strides also are being made in meat inspection, where soon there will be computers to check poultry. "It will be much more efficient," she said, "we won't have to look at meat bird by bird."

Charles Parrott vice president of financial planning with Lebanon Valley National Bank discussed estate planning. "It's a very broad topic," he said. "It gets really complicated. But I want to alert you to certain ideas."

Estate planning is necessary for
(Turn to Page D5)



Pa. Senator Noah Wenger

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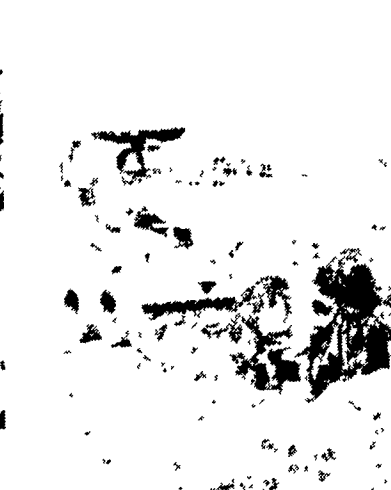
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