

Bedford Extension Assn. Annual Meeting

BY BETH GRAY

Bedford Co. Correspondent

BEDFORD — Recognizing change, adopting change and planning for additional change emerged as the theme at the annual meeting here Feb. 25 of the Bedford County Cooperative Extension Association.

Association President Thomas Wakefield of Bedford RD 4 applauded the efforts during the past two transitional years of James Weiler, currently interim County Extension Director (CED) and Regional Farm Management Agent. Weiler had returned to Bedford County from his regional position at Altoona when CED John Holbert retired in 1986. Weiler previously was an assistant agent in Bedford County. With the retirement last year of Home Economist and 4-H Agent Chrystle Wackerman, Weiler assumed additional duties.

The assignments changed again as Susan Fox in January was named dairy agent, and Richard Dale joined the County staff in February as agronomy and 4-H youth agent. Fox earlier served in Lawrence County and Dale, in

Clearfield County. Weiler introduced the new agents to the nearly 100 persons attending the meeting.

The Association instituted change at the gathering as they approved new by-laws succeeding those adopted in 1984. The primary differences, according to executive committee member Daniel Smith of Roaring Spring RD 1:

—"Board members may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Members may be re-elected or reappointed after at least one year of absence from the board." Previously, board members could serve ad infinitum.

—"Ordinarily there shall be four program development committees...: agriculture, 4-H youth, family living, and community development." Until this adoption, the County committees had been limited to 4-H advisory and family living.

Smith explained that Extension associations across the Commonwealth were making an effort to attain some uniformity in their by-laws so that they could operate effectively within the regional and state Extension councils.

Speaking briefly, Regional Extension Director Harold Ott noted, "Extension in Pennsylvania and Bedford County has undergone a great deal of change (in the past year). You had to have a score card to keep track of what was going on." Ott expressed satisfaction that Bedford County now had a full Extension staff, the result, he pointed out, of a \$5 million allocation from the State legislature. Wakefield added that, due to the allocation, Pennsylvania is the only state currently hiring Extension personnel. "We are in the forefront," Wakefield said.

Ott continued, "With change in staff, there will be change in Bedford's programs over time. We didn't replace people... We filled the staff and that will change programs" because different people bring different personalities and expertise to their jobs.

"We'll be doing more regional programming in the future," Ott forecast. "If we have expertise in Somerset, Cambria, Fulton counties, we'll bring those people here for a day. Likewise, I expect Bed-

ford's people will share their expertise with other counties." Such regional programming will utilize resources most efficiently, he indicated.

Kenneth Corle, Roaring Spring RD 1 dairyman, was elected president of the association during the business meeting. Also elected were Dottie Bromley of Schellsburg RD 1, vice president; Joan Mann of Bedford RD 3, secretary, and Bonnie Foor of Everett RD 1, treasurer.

Fred Claycomb of Bedford RD 2 reported on activities and concerns of the regional and state Extension councils, noting, "Our aim is to get our thoughts and recommendations through to (Penn State) University people who are making (Extension) decisions."

Guest speaker Mary Grim, past State Extension Council president, gave credence to Claycomb's observation, saying that the councils were the conveyors of grass roots ideas and needs, and that University decision makers do, indeed, listen. For instance, the

plan for regional programming, Grim said, came out of the state council.

With the councils made up of representatives from county Extension associations, their voices come from the most local entities, Grim indicated. "It's you people sitting here in Bedford County saying (these things) are important that makes Pennsylvania a leader among the nation's 50 states. It all begins in counties like right here." Grim urged, "We need your leadership. When you're called, please say 'yes.'"

The Milk Check

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part now is that USDA wants your opinion on whether you're interested in such a change. If enough producers respond a hearing will be held. Just a note saying you're interested in a base-excess plan is all they're asking for now. In case you lost your letter from the Market Administrator just send your opinion to Deputy Administrator, Marketing Programs, USDA/AMS P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456 by February 26.

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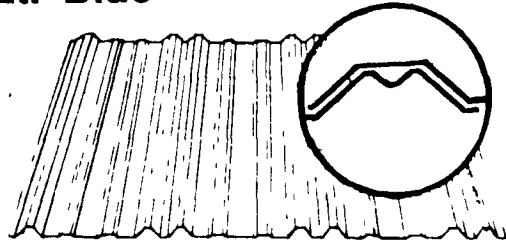
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