

## Maryland Farm Families Needed To Host Russian Ag Students

ANNAPOLIS, MD — The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB), and other ag organizations are looking for families to host agricultural students from Russia this year as part of an exchange program.

If enough farm family hosts are found, as many as 30 students age 19-23 would spend two to three months in Maryland this summer working on farms and learning American ways.

The exchange program is an outgrowth of a cultural exchange

agreement signed by former President Ronald Reagan and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Also being recruited are Maryland ag students who would be interested in spending a summer in Russia on farms.

Host families would be required to provide room and board for the exchange students and be encouraged to hire them to provide the visitors with pocket money. Transportation expenses to and from the United States will be paid by the students.

Commenting on the program,

Robert L. Walker, deputy secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture, said, "the exchange allows young agriculturalists to gain a first-hand knowledge of the people and methods of farming in both the Soviet Union and the United States. It's a people to people exchange that allows hosts to learn from the guests as well."

Walker of MDA and Elmer White of MFB are coordinating the program with officials of the Soviet Embassy in Washington.

According to Walker, host fam-

ilies in Maryland need not be able to speak Russian as students in Russia selected for the program will have a working knowledge of English.

"American students interested in going to Russia don't have to know Russian," he says, "because they will be given some Russian

language instruction in the Soviet Union."

Anyone interested in being a Maryland host for a Russian ag student, or in going to Russia as an exchange ag student for the summer is asked to contact Walker at 301/841-5881 or White at the Maryland Farm Bureau, 301/922-3426.

## New York Grange Calls For Government To Control Spending

CORTLAND, NY — As state and federal officials prepare their annual budgets, the New York State Grange is again calling on local, state and federal governments to control expenditures to ease the property tax burden faced by state residents.

"Residents of this state are faced with ever increasing property taxes and the fault lies primarily with the governments which are unable or unwilling to act with fiscal conservatism," Bert S. Morse, master of the state Grange, said today.

Morse was particularly critical of steps taken by state and federal governments in recent years to shift the burden of funding public services to counties, cities, towns and villages.

He said it is unfair for the state and federal governments to cut their own budgets by passing their financial troubles on to local governments which are already overburdened.

"The Grange continues to be concerned that no action seems to be taken to at least hold taxes to their current level," Morse said

from the Cortland headquarters of the state Grange.

He said economic growth in recent years has expanded the tax base and governments should be able to use this additional revenue to pay for increased expenses without having to raise taxes.

The state Grange is also opposed to governments borrowing to pay for capital projects. Morse said fiscal foresight would enable governments to plan ahead for such expenses and borrowing should be kept to a minimum.

The state Grange is an agricultural and rural affairs organization with 457 Granges in 52 counties within New York State.



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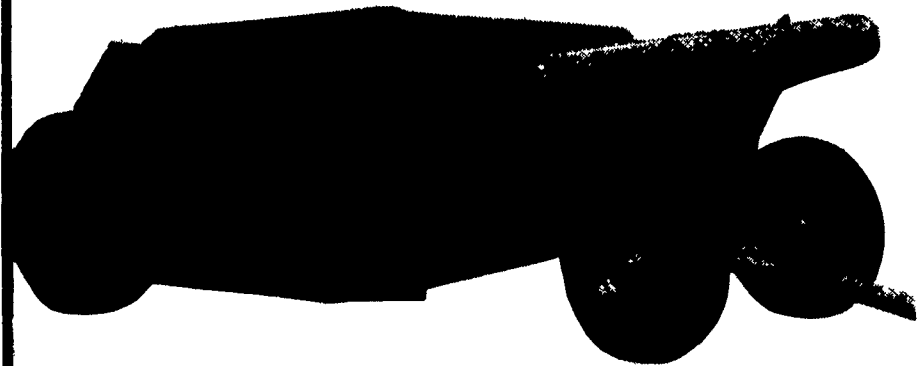
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