

## Farmers Will Address Legislators

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — More than 400 farmers from throughout the state will travel to Harrisburg on Monday, April 2 to meet with their state legislators concerning problems facing agriculture.

The meetings have been scheduled as part of the annual Harrisburg legislative tour of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA). PFA is a voluntary, statewide farm organization representing more than 22,600 families in 54 county associations.

Keith Eckel of Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, president of PFA, said, "Wetland regulations, roadside litter, trespass by vehicle on private lands, and proposed nutrient management plans are among the major concerns our members will be discussing. We're looking forward to meeting with our state legislators to personally convey our policy views on these and other issues."

PFA leaders will be voicing support for S.B. 1326, which would establish a program to preserve and protect wetlands. The legislation would more thorough-

ly define the characteristics of wetlands to be regulated, set timetables for government agencies to review wetlands permit applications, and provide for compensation to landowners if a permit for wetlands use is denied or is excessively restrictive. The legislation would also allow wetlands, which had been farmed during the last 25 years, to be returned to production.

PFA is also supporting H.B. 193 and S.B. 1272, which would create a new vehicle code offense for trespass on private lands by motor vehicles, including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and snowmobiles. Penalties would include fines for trespassing on fenced or posted private roads and for destroying property or driving on cultivated fields. Violators would face a driver's license suspension for the second offense.

PFA will be asking legislators to incorporate PFA policy into two bills, H.B. 1838 and H.B. 1980, which would require nutrient management plans for farms. PFA is recommending that the legislation give the state depart-

ment of agriculture a role in administering the program and provide sufficient state funds to assist farmers in implementing manure management plans. PFA is also requesting that farmers with approved nutrient management plans be protected from pollution liability. A state nutrient management program should also preempt local regulations, PFA believes.

PFA will be collecting signatures at the conference for its

statewide "Cash 'Em, Don't Trash 'Em" campaign, aimed at placing deposits on beverage bottles and cans. The signatures are being collected in support of S.B. 1360, which would put the "bottle bill" question on a referendum for Pennsylvania voters to decide in a statewide election.

The results of the nonbinding referendum could then guide the General Assembly in dealing with the issue. PFA believes the recycling law will not solve the prob-

lem of roadside litter, which costs farmers millions of dollars annually in damage to farm equipment and injury to farm animals.

"We hope to make a strong case for each of these issues during our face-to-face meetings with lawmakers," Eckel said. The PFA leaders will also host their state representatives at a banquet at the Harrisburg Marriott, where Eckel will highlight key farm issues.

## Ag Land Program Expects Big Year

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) expects, in 1990, to see the highest level of activity since the program began in 1977 thanks to its new Two-Cycle Easement Offer Program and bid consideration.

Prior to this year, MALPF considered easement sales applications once a year. According to Leonard Lowry, the foundation's new chairman, "We are seeing a major increase in applications so far this year and expect our big-

gest year ever."

Lowry recently became chairman of MALPF. He has a long background in Maryland's agricultural land preservation efforts, having served as a member of the original 1973 "committee to study the preservation of agricultural land. He joined MALPF's board in 1983.

For many years, Lowry operated a dairy farm in the Fairview-Cearfoss area near Hagerstown and has served as a district supervisor of the Washington County Soil Conservation District. He also is a past president of the Washington County Farm Bureau and the Hagerstown-Washington

County Chamber of Commerce.

Moving up to take Lowry's post as vice-chairman of MALPF is Dan C. Shortall Jr. of Queen Anne, Maryland in Queen Anne's County. Shortall raises broiler chickens and operates a 700-acre grain farm. He is serving his second term on the MALPF board and was one of the founding members of the Queen Anne's Ag Land Preservation Advisory Board.

The next deadline for submission of applications to sell development rights easements will be July 1, 1990. For additional information, contact the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, (301) 841-5860.

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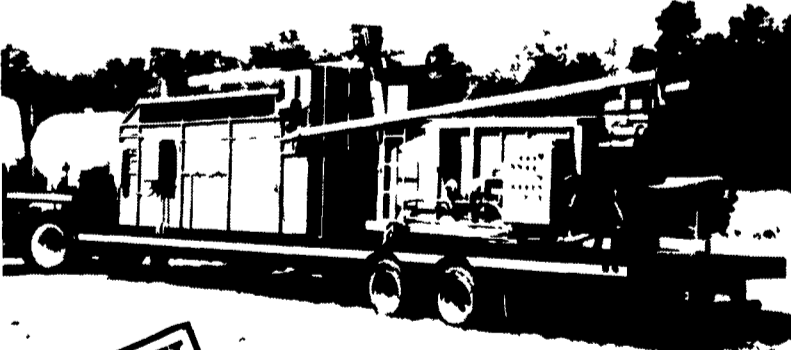
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