

## Agri-Business Association Formed To Tell Positive Side Of Farming

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have been eligible. In addition to the old fertilizer group, the association is now open to the entire ag chemical industry. In essence, anyone involved in the sale of agronomic products or services to production agriculture in Pennsylvania is eligible for membership.

PAPA started with 40 members and already has added an additional 40 members. "The national companies jumped on board because they want representation in each state," Brubaker said. "Pesticide and nutrient management issues that are important to our industry are administered and put into law in each individual state. So it will be our goal to guide these issues in Pennsylvania so the whole ag industry can live with them."

The new association is affiliated with both the National Agricultural Chemical Association and the Fertilizer Institute. These organizations are located in Washington, DC, and are active in behalf of the chemical/fertilizer industry at the national level. In PAPA the emphasis will be directed to the state legislature and the general public. Through their legislative committee headed by William Angstadt Jr., Reading, PAPA plans a very active year to put a

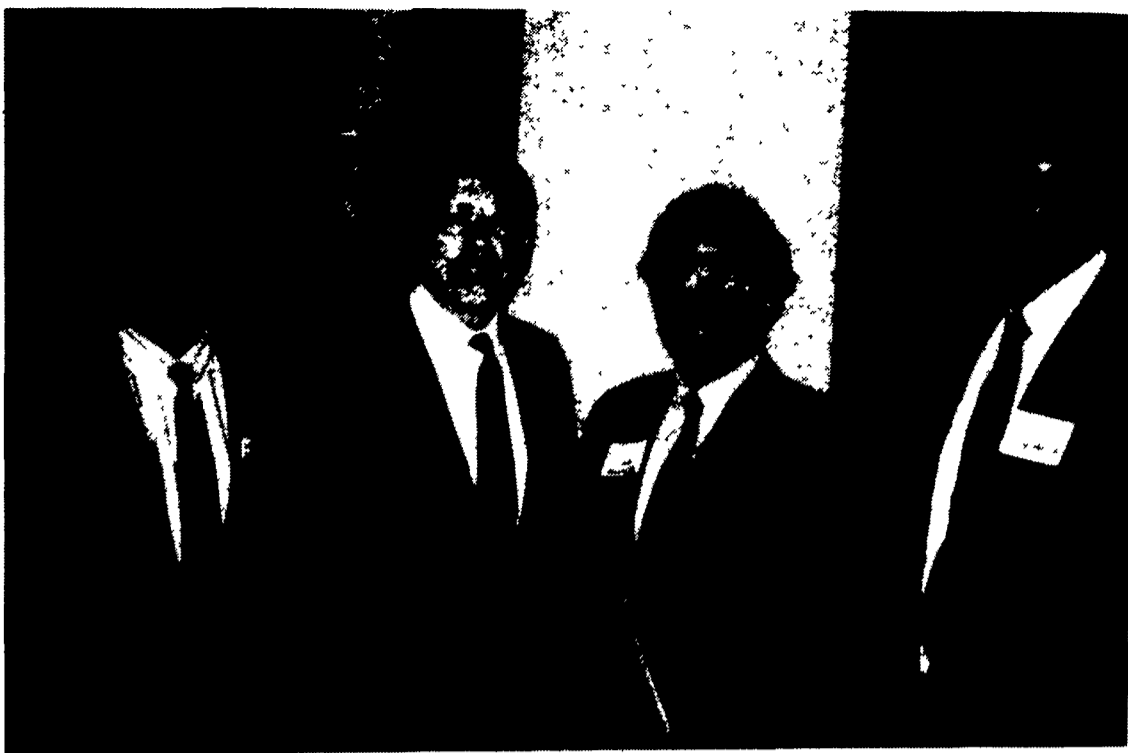
grass roots political contact system into place. The goal is to match the state house and senate Ag committee members with PAPA member constituents to develop a personal relationship.

"We want these legislators to know us so they will call on us when an issue surfaces that needs some discussion," Brubaker said. "We want to be as their standing advisory committee."

Another committee called FACTS (fertilizer agricultural chemical truth statements) is planned to be a pro-industry group to reach out to tell the public all the positive things this industry has done for them. The FACTS committee is headed by George Holton, Mobay Chemical Company.

The Penn State liaison committee wants to establish and maintain communication with the college of agriculture to insure that proper training and educational vehicles are in place to prepare the industry with advisors in IPM and ICM for their farm customers.

In an interview this week, Brubaker said the membership and budgeting of the 20 major environmental groups that are opposing agriculture is unbelievable. "It's hard to fathom the money these people have budgeted," Brubaker said. "The disturbing thing is that



At the first official meeting of the newly formed state pro-ag association called Pennsylvania Agronomic Products Association are, left to right, Kenneth Clemmer, president; Boyd Wolff, state ag secretary; Walter Peechatka, director state Bureau of Plant Industry; and William Brubaker, executive secretary.

much of their rationale is not based on fact but on hysteria and emotion. The whole Alar thing was staged. It's almost like it's subversive.

"Our industry has taken steps to meet environmental issues. Fertilizer applications are down over the

last 10 years. So we have already cut back on our input of nutrients on the ground. In addition, a lot of fertilizer applications are now put on at timing intervals that make the nutrients almost totally available to the plant and therefore less susceptible to leaching into the aquif-

er. We are sensitive to the needs of the environment, but the problem is also farm economics. We must find a balance between environmental consciousness and farm economics. In that balance is where we must work in the next 10 to 15 years," Brubaker said.

## Farmers Send Bottles

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Michael Fisher (D-37), who heads the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee where legislation on the issue has been stalled since November 1989.

When *Lancaster Farming* contacted Senator Fisher's office later in the week after he had "two bags of cans sitting in his office," David Hess the senator's spokesman said Senator Fisher was aware of and sympathetic with the farmer's problem of litter. But he said they don't necessarily agree that a deposit bill would be effective in dealing with a public attitude that must be changed.

Senator Fisher, who sponsored

the prime recycling law in 1988, dealt with an amendment in the house that would have made deposits part of the recycling law. This amendment was defeated by a 130 to 57 vote.

Hess said it was true that mandatory recycling will not reach every community in the state but he believes that voluntary recycling will be put into place in the other areas. For this reason, they believe we should give the state's recycling law a chance to work before getting involved in a whole new program. Hess did not see any difference between the issue of new legislation and the simple request to put the issue on the bal-

lot so the voters can settle it.

The cans, which were specially prepared for mailing by PFA, contain the message that Pennsylvania farmers are paying the price for carelessly discarded beverage cans and bottles. It costs the farm community more than \$37 million annually.

PFA is seeking passage of Senate Bill 1360, calling for a voter referendum on whether Pennsylvania should enact bottle deposit legislation. The cans were sent by farmers who visited PFA's exhibit during Penn State's Ag Progress Days last week. Farmers also signed petitions urging a referendum on the bottle deposit

question. PFA has been gathering support statewide for the referendum and plans to present Governor Casey with 100,000 signatures. A copy of the signatures will also be presented to Sen. Fisher.

"In sending the beverage cans, we want to give lawmakers a small sample of what we face on a regular basis," Newpher said. "Roadside trash and litter injures farm animals, ruins crops and damages farm equipment in addition to causing farmers down time for clean up and repairs. With a busy harvest season ahead, this is a burden farmers don't need."

The message on the cans reads: "Pennsylvania farmers have sought a deposit on beverage cans and bottles for nearly twenty years. We can no longer wait!"

Newpher said that Pennsylvania's municipal recycling law is good but doesn't go far enough for farmers. A deposit law would

reduce roadside litter. Oregon, the first state to enact a returnable law, continues to report more than an 83% reduction in beverage container litter. Main reports an 86% decrease and Michigan an 80% decrease.

"We think a beverage container law is needed in Pennsylvania and we believe the public agrees," Newpher said. "All we're asking the legislature to do is give the voters a chance to speak their minds on this issue."

PFA has 23,000 farm family members with 54 county units. It is affiliated with the American Farm Bureau Federation. The more than 500 specially labeled beverage cans were signed by farmers and rural residents. These labeled cans were loaded into mail bags at PFA's home office Monday morning, and then transported to the Post Office.



Cans were mailed to state legislators to call attention to the litter in farmer's fields along public highways. At a news conference at the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association are, left to right, Richard Newpher, administrative secretary, Richard Mains, Neville farmer and Alvin Myers, manager, governmental relations.

## Northumberland Co. Will Hold Twilight Meeting

RIVERSIDE (Northumberland Co.) — The Northumberland County Conservation District and Penn State Cooperative Extension will sponsor a twilight meeting on Thursday, August 30 from 7 p.m.-9:05 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Leon and Neil Wertz farm, 2½ miles southeast of Riverside. Signs will be posted to the farm from Route 54.

The meeting has been approved by the PA Department of Agriculture as an update training session for pesticide certification renewal for private applicators. Private applicators will receive three credits (1 core and 2 category) toward certification renewal.

Steve Ferraro, Dupont Com-

pany, will speak on post-emergence grass control in corn. A representative of the Columbia Crop Improvement Association will also be on hand to discuss integrated pest management.

County agents Norman Conrad and Vernon Brose will discuss chemical carry over problems from herbicides and the safe handling, use, and disposal of farm chemicals. George Phillips of the conservation district staff will present a slide program on Chesapeake Bay projects and the results of no-till and nutrient management demonstration plots.

Refreshments and door prizes will be provided by the Northumberland County Conservation District.

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