

# Barbara Grumbine Appointed To U.S. Department Of Agriculture

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MYERSTOWN (Lebanon Co.)

— Barbara Grumbine, always a staunch supporter of family and farm, is moving to Washington D.C.

Grumbine is the newly assigned Northeast area director of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

That means, she is responsible for the coordination and administration of all Federal Farm Programs in a 12-state area covering Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

Barbara, her husband Dennis, and sons Daryl and Darren are well known in political and agricultural circles. It is the combination of ag and politics that has given Barbara the expertise needed for this government-appointed job.

"The government needs people who are sensitive to community needs in order to do what is best for constituents," Barbara said.

"My goal is to go to Washington and do the best job that I can for the people in the Northeast," Barbara said.

As far as Barbara has been able to determine, she is the first woman appointed to this position that serves as a liaison between the government and those who request public aid for drought, depressed milk prices, and other ag-related problems.

The Grumbines are well acquainted with the concerns of farmers since they have been farming for 22 years. They own a 150-head purebred hog and a 125-head Dorset sheep operation that has received national and state recognition for its champions. They also raise corn, wheat, beans, and hay on their 125-acre Myerstown farm.

Politically, Barbara and her husband Dennis have been involved at local, state, and national levels for 25 years. Barbara has served as past president of the Lebanon County Council of Republican Women, as Judge of Election, with Pennsylvania Ag Republicans, with the Farmers for Thornburgh campaign, with the Farmers for Scranton campaign, with the Reagan-Bush campaign, with the Farmers for Bush campaign, and attended the last three inaugurations.

Barbara recalls that when she

first heard about the position, she knew right away that it was something that she wanted to do. She said, "It was too good of an opportunity to turn down."

The only drawback seemed to be the distance, which would require that she live in the D.C. area during the week.

Barbara, who has always made her family a priority, is a bit concerned that she will be separated from her family during the week, but her 19-year-old son Darien advised her, "Go for it, Mom. You've been here for us, now it's your turn."

After considerable discussions, the family decided that the move will not be detrimental to family life since Barbara will be able to come home weekends. "Besides, Barbara said, when I'm home, we don't get to see each other much in the evenings because we are involved in so many community organizations, school sporting events, and meetings."

The big attraction to accepting the position is that it gives Barbara a chance to do what she seems to do best — speak up for agriculture. "No matter what I do or where I am, I seem to always end up talking about agriculture," she said.

"Agriculture is our life — not just a way of life," she continued, "I'll do anything to promote agriculture."

While Barbara packs her bags to move to a Washington D.C. high-rise, Dennis and the boys stack up cookbooks in an effort to develop some culinary skills.

But forget about cleaning. Dennis said, "As meticulous as she is with cleaning, we aren't even going attempt to tackle that."

Naturally, Barbara doesn't want to fill her weekends with cleaning either so she is hiring a housecleaner.

Although Barbara will be separated from her family during the week, she said that her personal goal remains the same. "To have a strong family unit and do what I can to support them. I'm old-fashioned in that respect."

Barbara applied for the government position in October. Several national committee people wrote letters on her behalf. Congressmen Bob Walker, Arlin Specter, and farm organizations such as the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau also backed Barbara's appointment.

On November 21, Barbara was interviewed by six people such as the administrator of ASCS, the



Scenes like these will be rare when Barbara moves to Washington D.C. while Dennis and the dog remain on the Myerstown farm.

U.S. Sec. of Agriculture, and President Bush's personnel director.

Because the assignment is a political appointment, it may end in one year if a new President is elected. On the other hand the term may be extended indefinitely or it may be the stepping stone to a higher government appointment.

Barbara said a big part of her job will be to learn to know people in the 12-state area. But the immensity of meeting so many new faces doesn't bother Barbara who said, "I can be in a group of strangers and strike up a conversation with anyone."

Leadership skills have also been honed in Barbara through her six years of serving on the Friedens Lutheran Church council. At church, she has also been chairperson of the Social Ministry committee; served on Christian Education committee; acted as substitute Sunday School teacher, and as co-chairperson of Bible School for several years.

She is a member of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, American Farm Bureau, and Myerstown Junior Woman's Club, where she was past club president and is currently chairperson of the Homelife Committee. Twice Barbara was named the outstanding club woman of the year for her involvement in taking charge of projects and for her commitment to club projects and leaders.

She is legislative chairperson of the Lebanon County Federation of Women's Clubs, past president of the ELCO Football Boosters, past president of the Lebanon County



Because of her strong agricultural and political background, Barbara was appointed Northeast area director of agricultural stabilization and conservation service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Society of Farm Women, and on the Lebanon County 4-H Development Board.

She was past president of the Lebanon County Council of Republican Women, Eastern Star member, Lebanon Valley Chamber of Commerce member, and served as Jackson Township Assessor.

Recently, Barbara received her real estate license and works for Century 21. She has driven school bus full time for 10 years and part time for the past 10 years.

For the past nine years, Barbara has worked full and part time in the business co-owned with husband, Evergreen Tractor Company, Inc., a John Deere and Bobcat dealership located in Lebanon. In 1987, the John Deere Company recognized their dealership as being the largest John Deere Ag tractor dealer in Pennsylvania that year. In 1990, the business was named Bobcat Dealer of the Year.

When Dennis was 14, he started raising purebred hogs, which he continued on a larger scale after his marriage to Barbara. The Grum-

bines got into the sheep business when Daryl wanted a market lamb for a 4-H project. Immediately, the Grumbines became successful in showing sheep. Dennis explained that being in the hog business gave them an edge in the sheep business. He said, "If you understand livestock, you can move into another species and take a lot of the general knowledge with you."

"We are of the opinion that if you don't allow children to use their own ideas then they will lose their interest in farming," Barbara said. "When they are interested, they take the time and energy to read and find out what's happening."

Dennis said, "We've always taught them that if you want to do something badly enough you can achieve it."

The sons have achieved recognition in state and national shows from the swine and sheep industry. As they become old to compete in 4-H, they are competing in open shows. Barbara said, "They (sons)

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Barbara will miss the 1783 Ironstone log house with its original log walls when she moves to a Washington D.C. highrise to begin her government appointed job. She will return to the farm weekends to be with her husband Dennis and two sons.

## Homestead Notes