

Hamilton Ag Day Speakers Offer View Of Future

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Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The agriculture lending department of Hamilton Bank held its 11th annual agricultural education seminar at the Lancaster County Farm and Home Center in Lancaster on Thursday, featuring economic outlooks for the 90s.

Regular speakers for the seminar were agricultural economics professors H. Louis Moore, from Pennsylvania State University, and David Kohl from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Also speaking was Orion C. Samuelson, radio and television agricultural reporter in the Midwest for 31 years. He is based out of Chicago.

Samuelson gave an entertaining presentation that was a mix of upbeat, "I can do it" philosophical messages with a number of anecdotes.

He talked mostly about the limits of resources in the nation and how the conflict between agricultural producer and neighbor-consumers should increase with increases in populations.

He said that farmers need to make every effort to create a positive atmosphere for dialogue between himself and his neighbor, who knows less and less about the methodology and requirements of agriculture and how it relates to the average citizen.

Moore has been a popular speaker at a number of different farmer seminar this year and repeated his messages.

In his presentation, Kohl said the world and the United States are facing drastic and unprecedented changes, which call for more than waiting out a recession. Rather than call the present economic situation a recession or a depression, Kohl referred to it as a "restructuring" that will take years to enact.

He said that in the 1990s, money will not be the primary priority among workers, he said the most highly valued commodity will be time.

According to Kohl, the changes in the world will be slow and steady, but offers great opportuni-

ties for all, especially agriculture. Kohl emphasized the growing importance of free time in a story he told about a recent visit to Florida.

Kohl said he regularly runs three to four miles every morning for exercise and while he was in Florida, staying at a hotel, he had been running along a relatively isolated stretch of highway that skirted the shoreline.

Several mornings of running had gone by without incident he said when one morning he noticed a man in a jogging outfit curled up on a bench holding a brown paper bag.

He said that as he ran closer to the man, it became more apparent that the situation was not normal. He said that he had thought that perhaps the man had a bottle in the bag, and so decided to run past the man.

As he passed the man, the man jumped up and gave chase and started calling to Kohl to stop so that they could talk.

Eventually after being chased a distance, Kohl said he decided to confront the man and stopped and quickly turned around. At that time, the man pulled out a handgun from the paper bag, and, at close distance, told Kohl he was going to kill him.

Kohl said he decided his best chance for survival, or to bring attention to his plight, was to run out into traffic, which he did.

He said that the man with the gun had continued to follow him, paralleling the highway and Kohl's efforts to continue to escape.

Eventually police arrived, responding to a number of phone calls made by drivers with car telephones, and the man was arrested, but only after he stripped and jumped off of a bridge.

Kohl said police found the gun unloaded, but also discovered that the man had been recently released from a mental institution because of a lack of funding due to national economic problems.

Kohl said he still has nightmares about the incident, but the story gave more impact to his message of prioritizing time over money.

However, Kohl said money will

continue to be an issue with everyone, especially farmers.

He offered several pieces of information from which to draw

perspective of the current state of affairs and what may happen.

According to Kohl: 48 percent of American farms are debt-free;

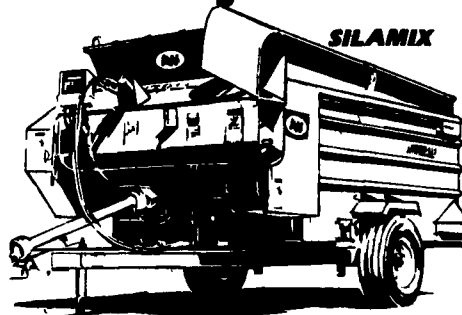
the average farm debt is \$2.66 for every dollar of income; the average equity is 82 percent; one in five

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David Kohl, agricultural economics professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, talks one-to-one with a participant in the 11th annual Hamilton Bank agri-education seminar. Kohl has been a regular, informative and entertaining speaker during the Hamilton-sponsored seminars.

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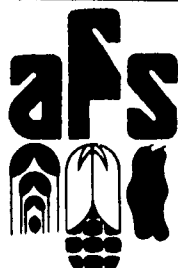
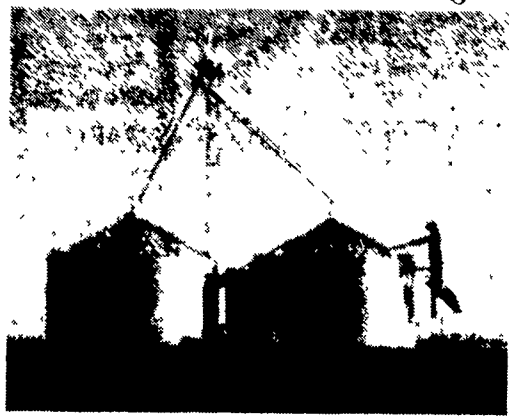
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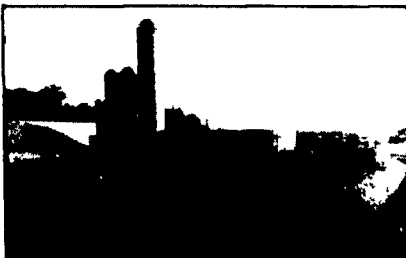
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