

## Polish Agricultural Advisors

(Continued from Page A1)

where 91,000 farmers own about six to eight acres. Although there are several farms with 5,000 to 30,000 layers, these farms are cooperatives owned by the government.

The egg packers used in Poland are similar to those used by Esbenshade, but Wilczak said, "We employ many more people on the cooperative farms because we need administrators and workers for each job." In addition, workers on the cooperatives are provided housing on the grounds.

The Polish guests were impress-

ed that the Esbenshades manage their operation with only one full time and one part-time employee.

The Polish government would like to privatize the cooperative farms because that would be so much more cost effective, but the method to make this transition is difficult because individual farmers do not have the funds to purchase these farms and the equipment needed.

Irwin sees western cooperatives as the solution and has taught extensively on how to create and run a cooperative with farmers buying shares.

The western cooperative concept also is attractive to both Wilczak and Flaga, who are taking a close look at how cooperatives operate in Pennsylvania. The pair toured Bedford Farm Bureau to learn how to set up a board of directors, sell shares of stock, and other management needed.

"The problem is that the Polish people are skeptical of cooperatives. They are familiar with the unpleasant aspects of eastern cooperatives where the government owns and runs everything," Wilczak said. "It is difficult for the people to grasp the difference

between Eastern and Western cooperatives."

Another problem with farmer-owned cooperatives is the lack of finances available to farmers.

Irwin said, "But American farmers did not have money to invest either when co-ops were being established in the 1950s. It was hard to get a farmer to buy a \$10 share, but they supported the idea and the concept worked."

Irwin, Wilczak, and Flaga are optimistic that cooperatives will be set up in Poland.

"It's only a matter of time," Irwin said. "It will be easier for them to set them up because they can profit from all our mistakes."

The Polish people are extremely receptive to American ideas.

"We welcome Americans with open arms. We trust American people and respect what we see they have done," Wilczak said.

She was especially impressed with the extensive record-keeping that American farmers keep. While here, she has learned how to set up record-keeping and is eager

to teach these skills to Polish farmers.

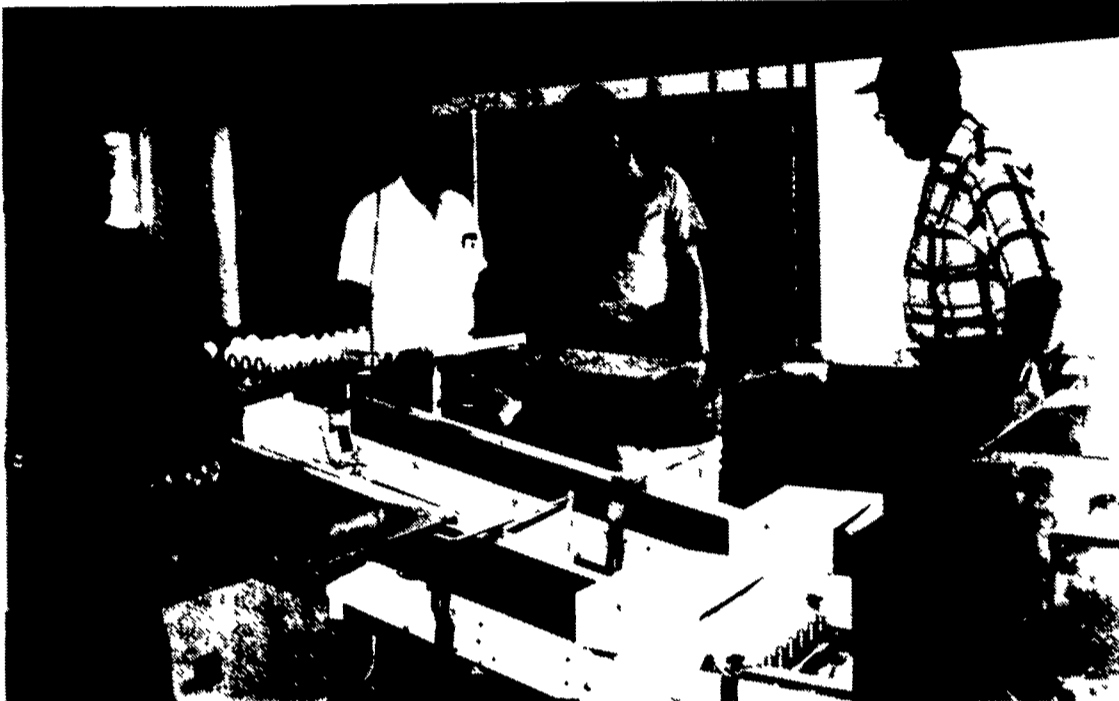
"It will be very beneficial for them to keep a record of weather, spraying, buying, and selling. It will help them plan for the following year," she said.

Poland's weather is conducive to good potato and other vegetable growing. Because Poland grows a large crop of potatoes, they see a joint venture with a potato chip company as an opportunity.

"We like potato chips, but need to have companies to produce them," Wilczak said.

Poland desires that joint venture arrangements be set up by American businesses. The Polish American Enterprise Fund lends money to Poland farmers for 8 to 14 percent interest compared to the 60 percent interest charged by Polish banks.

The Extension work under way in Poland is described by Polish officials as being one of the most successful efforts of any country in the world that is trying to help the country become a free market economy.



J. LeRoy Esbenshade, right, discusses egg production with Polish visitor Jozef Flaga, center, and Jay Irwin, who spent six months in Poland with the Extension service, which assists the former communist-ruled country in making the transition to a free market economy.

## Lancaster Bee Keepers To Meet

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Jim Steinhauer, head of the Pennsylvania Bee Inspection Program, is to speak on the new problems of internal and external mites recently introduced into the Americas, during a meeting of the Lancaster County Honey Producers, 6:30 p.m., May 21, at the home of Norman Landis, 1500 Colebrook Rd.

Steinhauer's talk is to start at

7:30 p.m. He is also to field other questions about threats to domestic bee strains, such as the African, or Killer, Bees, which are now in southern Texas, and the effects of the dangerous bee species.

In addition, starting 6:30 p.m., an open hive inspection of honey bees at work is scheduled.

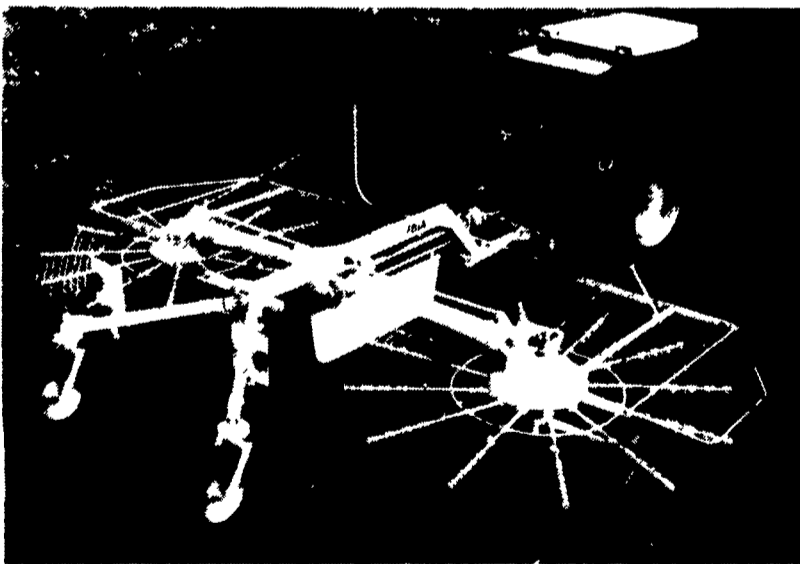
For more information, call (717) 284-4812, or (215) 267-5860.



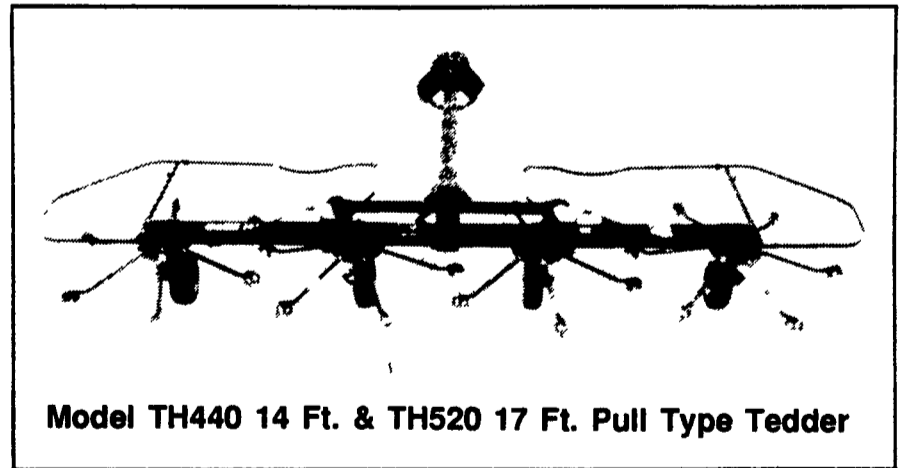
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