

DER Secretary Says Not Enough

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, August 22, 1992-A21

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action. Amendments to the bill are being considered.

"The present course has clearly not been sufficient, and time's running and we're not making the progress we need to make," said Davis. "I think you're going to have some kind of a mandatory program that will get these farmers to take the issue of nutrient management seriously."

According to Davis, farmers should be concerned about certain movements by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to possibly implement countrywide water and nutrient management mandates. These mandates may take effect in the form of national pollution discharge and elimination system

(NPDES) permits which determine when and exactly how "discharge" material, which manure could be considered, will be handled.

Farmers aren't factories

"I just don't want to see us get into that kind of a situation," he said. "(Farmers) aren't big factories, they're not discharging industrial waste. I just don't want to see us have to do it."

During a question-and-answer session, John Schwartz, Lancaster extension director, refuted claims that farmers, at least in the Lancaster County area, aren't writing nutrient management plans.

Schwartz said that in a recent survey he conducted, more than 1,500 farms in the county have

implemented written nutrient management plans. Out of 3,400 livestock and poultry farms, he said, 45 percent of the farmers have implemented the plans.

The extension director said there are "more plans out there written than what people are giving agriculture credit for."

Misunderstandings

Many farmers, according to Davis, are reluctant to work with DER because of the many misunderstandings about what DER's role is.

"Regulations and regulators are rarely beloved," he said. "I understand that, it goes with the territory." However, DER is not "nine feet tall with one eye in the middle of its forehead, and look out," he said. "I'd like, to the extent that I

can, dispel that idea."

For too long, DER has been viewed as the villain, and the farmer as the villain, according to several statements by representatives at the meeting — which does little to promote cooperation between the agencies and the farmers.

Davis said the whole issue of nutrient management is "galvanizing farmers here and elsewhere."

According to the DER secretary, there are many options available for farmers, including working with the conservation district.

"You either plan things the way you want them to happen or wait until they happen to you," he said. "I don't want to see them happen to us. And I think (H.B.) 496 is the best option available and a very fair one to deal with the questions."

Lancaster County Farmers' Association Holds Policy Meetings

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Lancaster County Farmers'

Association will be holding county wide policy meetings for all interested farmers at the following locations:

- August 24 — at the home of president Jane Balmer, Mount Joy, 7:30 p.m. (717) 653-5916.
- August 25 — at the home of Karl Herr, Kirkwood, 7:30 p.m. (717) 529-2571.
- September 1 — at the monthly board meeting of the Lancaster County Farmers' Association, there will be an open policy meeting from 8 to 9 p.m. For more information contact president Jane Balmer (717) 653-5916.

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301-696-1646

Walker Schedules Annual Farm Visits

The annual farm tour for Robert Walker, Congressman from the 16th district of Pennsylvania, is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26. Five farms are on the schedule.

At 9 a.m. is the John Howard farm, Willow Street. Location: follow Route 222 south from Lancaster, go five miles, turn right on Hans Herr Drive, 1st farm on left.

At 10 a.m. is the tour of Jack Coleman's farm, Ronks. Location: from Strasburg, follow Route 741 east, turn left on Cherry Hill Road, go to second farm on left.

At 11:15 a.m. is David Herr's farm, Parkersburg. Location: from Gap, take Route 41 south to Octorara High School, turn left on Hiland Road, go 1 & 1/2 miles to second farm lane on left.

1:30 p.m. is the Gordon Hoover farm. Location: from Intercourse go east on Route 340 to White Horse, turn left on Cambridge Road, go 1/2 mile. At sharp left go straight ahead in the farm lane.

At 3 p.m. is Charles Gable's farm, Elverson. Location: from Elverson go south on Route 82 and turn right on Chestnut Tree Road; go through Beam Road to first farm on right.

Walker invites farmers to meet and talk about questions from the agricultural community.

Bucks Holstein Field Day

BEDMINSTER (Bucks Co.) — The Bucks County Holstein Club's annual field day and picnic is scheduled for August 29 at the home of Galen and Nancy Leatherman, near Bedminster.

Galen Leatherman said it would be helpful if members would call by August 24 to let him or Nancy know how many plan to attend. Call (215) 766-8857.

The noon meal is a covered dish lunch, and members should bring a main dish and dessert for the family and four others. Also bring a place setting for your own family.

Milk, butter, rolls and ice cream are to be provided by the club.

At 11 a.m. the cattle judging begins. After lunch, at 1 p.m., the scheduled speaker is to be Rich Harvey, executive director of the Bucks County Farmland Preservation Program. He is planning to discuss the history and accomplishments and goals of the program.

The event is to be held, rain or shine.