

# LVNB Holds Annual Ag Seminar

**VERNON ACHENBACH JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**PRESCOTT** (Lebanon Co.) — Though snows and cold weather persist, many farmers in the Lebanon Valley region have come to consider the recent annual Lebanon Valley National Bank farmer seminar as the first true sign of spring.

The seminar is held annually at the Prescott Fire Hall, and this year more than 400 people attended by invitation. The purpose of the seminar is to bring together as many of the bank's clients and others for an educational day on the latest or most significant current events which affect agriculture.

This year, speakers included Kenneth Winebark, Lebanon County Extension agent; state Rep. Sheila Miller, R-Berks; Dr. Lynn Sammons, DVM, large animal specialist with Willow Creek Animal Hospital, Myerstown; H. Louis Moore, Pennsylvania State University professor of agricultural economics; and Albert Murry, president and CEO of LVNB.

The program included Moore's analysis and prognosis for agricultural commodity prices, based on existing prices, production estimates, current demand estimates, trading practices, and political environment. Known for his agricultural outlooks, Moore has been a perennial and frequent speaker at different agricultural seminars and

programs in the state.

Moore also co-writes a regular column for an agribusiness publication, "The PennAg Journal."

Returning for the second year to the podium to discuss nutrient management, state Rep. Miller discussed the contents of the nutrient management proposal contained in House Bill 100 (printer's No. 178), and handed out copies for the audience to take home and read.

Miller is a freshman legislator in the House, but she has been involved in Harrisburg and agricultural politics for years, last serving as executive director of the state Senate Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee.

Last year she warned of a large number of farms being projected as going out of business under now obsolete proposals for nutrient management legislation.

When it came time to testify during a public hearing last year, she did not get support from researchers who made the projections she had told last year's group.

However, last week she said that the old proposal would have affected a large percentage of farms compared to the estimated 15 percent who would be required to create a nutrient management plan under the current proposal.

She voted for H.B. 100.

She explained the process of arriving at the wording contained within H.B. 100 and said she had one reservation with the current

bill, which may be addressed while in the Senate agricultural committee, depending on what its chairman and ultimately the Democratic Caucus decide to allow in amendments.

She said her one concern with the proposal is that it does not specifically address cash-crop farmers who may be overloading their land with chemical nutrients, but do not have livestock, and therefore do not fall within the only defining threshold contained in the H.B. 100 proposal — those farms with 2,000 pounds or more of livestock (including poultry) per acre of land (owned or rented).

She said it is a concern to her and some others that cash crop farmers are not specifically addressed, but that because chemical nutrient use is contained under the list of sources of nutrients to be addressed, it may not be a real concern.

Miller, in her former capacity, worked for years on nutrient management proposals, receiving criticism for allegedly sitting on previously House-approved legislation.

However, she said the current proposal is a reflection of much work done while the previously House-passed nutrient management bill was in the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Much of the wording and proposals generated and agreed to during the past year was introduced as

legislation late last session, receiving bipartisan support of the House. This bill contains much of the wording proposed last session, and it was also amended to reflect additional areas of concern in the agricultural community.

She said the audience should read over the proposal and if they have concerns, to talk to their representatives, including her.

Using a carousel of slides to illustrate his talk, Winebark discussed the industry in the Lebanon Valley, its accomplishments and its diversity.

Designed somewhat as a pep talk, Winebark's address also contained a number of not widely publicized facts about the area's agricultural character.

"It's important to remember what mark agriculture is making on the community," he said.

Winebark said the changes in agriculture are all around, such as the large dairy freestall, research into robotic milkers, continued improvements in genetics and technology and overall care and understanding of bovines, lengths of poultry and hog facilities expressed in multiples of football fields, etc.

He said that farmers and all agribusinessmen in the Lebanon-Berks-Lancaster area have a good reason to be proud of the job they are doing.

Winebark said that for the fourth year in a row, not only has Lebanon County led the state in milk production per cow, but the average this past year broke the 19,000 pounds of milk-per-cow barrier.

"Fifty percent of the pork in the state is raised in the area," Winebark said, adding that not only are the local swine used for meat products, but hogs are used as a source of valves for human hearts, in the making of insulin, cortisone, cray-

ons, and of course leather.

He also said that while many agriculturalists recognize the strength of the industry in which they participate, they can fail to see the significance of other agricultural industries within the community.

He talked about the area's 10 million hens, the turkeys, the fruits and vegetables, the 2.5 million trout, the area's \$300 million worth of cow-calf operations, 14,000 sheep, horse production, 300,000 acres of corn for grain and the additional 40 percent that goes to make silage, the 100,000 acres of hay, greenhouse operations such as Laysers, which is one of the top 100 producers in the nation with more than 13 acres in greenhouses, the strong ornamental industry, roadside retail markets, bologna, etc.

He said that further, there are many food processors in the area which also contribute heavily to the area's economy, such as Murray Steaks, which buys boxed beef from across the country, cuts and prepare the meat products and ships them back out to 17 different states.

"Food processors have played an important role and will continue to as long as it continues to be (profitable to remain in the area.)"

As far as retail markets for the agricultural products, he said that they are also very important, because in addition to providing outlets for local produce, they also impact on the general public, because that is where the general public gets the majority of its experience with agricultural commodities.

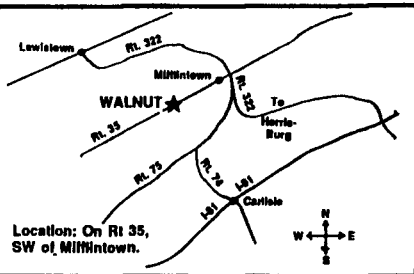
Further, he said that farmers should think about their total impact on the community, and said they should, "Go out and produce the kind of product your proud to have produced."

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