

Senate Confirms Brosius As Ag Secretary

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Lancaster Farming Staff

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Spring.

On the day of the year the nation has officially set aside to recognize the importance of agriculture, Charles Brosius, of West Grove, was confirmed in the state Senate as the Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture.

Brosius, who with his wife Jane and three sons, has continued a mushroom growing business started by his grandfather on their dairy farm in 1915, was nominated by Gov. Tom Ridge earlier this month to head the department.

Support for the nomination has been strong from all agricultural organizations representing agriculture.

One of the first official acts as fully confirmed secretary was to greet participants to the Penn's Agri-Women Ag Day luncheon, held in the state Capitol. In fact, he was confirmed by the Senate about the same time as the luncheon.

Last week, Brosius was before the Senate Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee for a confirmation hearing. The committee is a body that can lead the rest of the Senate into favoring or disfavoring a nominee as agriculture secretary.

Brosius was fully supported.

In his presentation in the hearing, Brosius said that his meetings with legislators following the announcement of his nomination "... demonstrated that all of you have a strong interest in Pennsylvania agriculture, so we have an important interest in common."

Brosius briefly reviewed his family business that is run by his sons and employs 39 full-time, and 18 part-time people.

The business ships a tractor trailer load of mushrooms five nights per week to markets in New York City, as well as serving markets in Lancaster and Harrisburg.

"In my meetings with Governor Ridge, we discussed many things, but I think he was most interested in the economic aspects of farming and in doing what we can do to help our 51,000 farm families operate profitable businesses, businesses that all of our customers rely on to provide safe, high quality food products.

"I think that when we evaluate our farm policies, we should look at helping the farmer to make a profit, and not try to measure our efforts by looking at how much money the commonwealth has spent, or how many people or programs we authorize to solve their problems.

"Agricultural profitability is not some new concept. Twice in the last two years, the leaders of most of the Pennsylvania agricultural organizations met here in Harrisburg to identify issues of common concern.

"During both of those so-called 'Ag-Agenda' meetings, the delegates agreed the top priority should be to ensure the viability of Pennsylvania's farms and agribusinesses.

"If farmers have the opportunity to operate profitable businesses, they will supply the products that please and satisfy our citizens — our customers — providing the nutrition needed for good health, while strengthening the economy of the rural communities of Pennsylvania.

"As the commonwealth works to protect farmers and consumers, our regulatory philosophy should also be results-driven.

"When a food inspector goes out to look at a processing plant, his or her goal should be to solve the problems — to improve food safety as fast as that can be accomplished.

"We think that an inspector who finds problems should have suggestions and advice.

"Yes, of course, some people have to be dragged into compliance, but in agribusiness, most farmers sincerely want to produce and deliver the best possible products to the consumer.

"The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has very little interest in punishing farmers or food processors for violations of regulations. Our interest is in safe food and a clean environment. And on those issues, farmers are even more concerned than consumers or environmental activists.

"They (farmers) rely on a clean environment for crop production and for animal health. In addition, they all know — from experience — what happens to the best marketing efforts if one person gets sick from a food-borne organism, or if an outbreak of animal disease occurs.

"Pennsylvania's farmers and processors are looking for ways to improve their operations and sell more products. Efforts to help them achieve those goals will preserve farms and businesses, help create new activity, and vitalize our economy."

Brosius also said that the state needs to take a lead role in helping to expand the markets for Pennsylvania-produced products, both domestically and internationally.

"Our department (PDA) does intend to get into the marketing business. We plan to act as facilitator — to open the doors of opportunity. USDA forecasts a record-breaking year for U.S. agricultural exports, and we intend to help Pennsylvania's farmers find and tap into that success," he said.

Brosius discussed the favorable location of the state to transporting products to all markets, because of relatively close proximity to international ports.

"Governor Ridge's vision for Pennsylvania includes job creation through the Keystone Export Strategy," he said. "The Department of Agriculture will team up to work with the Department of Commerce to implement that strategy. It's expected to create 100,000 new jobs while raising the commonwealth's export potential to \$5 billion over four years.

"The governor has pledged hands-on involvement with that strategy, which will be good for the state's companies and workers. We intend to make agriculture an important part of the export expansion."

Brosius detailed examples of what kinds of cooperative effort within state government he expects will help attain that growth. Further he called for less of a tax burden for farmers.

"I think that Pennsylvania's efforts toward farmer-friendly regulation and market expansion should be accompanied by major improvements in the tax climate for agriculture. Every farm and agricultural processor in Pennsylvania can realize a better bottom line when the tax burden is reduced — and those earnings can be realized without increasing consumer food prices.

"Processing plants create jobs, and because they buy the crops and livestock that our farms produce, they also create new markets for our growers.

"So, when Pennsylvania makes its tax climate more attractive than competing states — and processors decide to come here — those new or relocations will expand markets for farm products," he said.

He also said that while state government helps all of this come about, at the same time, "We need to help them defend their farms from modern pressures that threaten their operations.

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SHORT NOTICE PUBLIC SALE TUES., APRIL 4, 1995

9:30 A.M.

Located 7 miles South of Quarryville. West of Route 472 from Kirkwood, East of Little Brittan Road from Fairmount, along Noble Road. Little Brittan Twp. Lancaster Co. Pa. Watch for Sale Signs.

Livestock

- 1 Pair 4 coming 5 yr. old Sorrel Molly Mules
- 1 Pair Red Sorrel, smooth mouth geldings
- 1 Offside Sorrel, smooth mouth work horse
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- One 3 yr. old Chestnut mare, halter broke

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15 Holstein Heifers - 2 Bred, 3 Breeding Age, 10 From Calves to 1 Yr. Old.

Farm Equipment

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New Holland 255 7' grass mower, Wisconsin 4 cyl. VE4 power unit with electric start, 8 volt starter, and reduction gear clutch; New Idea crimper; New Holland 55 hay rake; three flatbed steel wheel wagons on Farm Bilt gears; McD 2-way plow; I&J cultivator, 3 yrs. old; McD riding cultivator; 6' & 9' spring harrows; 9' steel roller; 10' single cultipacker; New Holland 14" ensilage cutter with 4 knives; 50' of 6" silo pipe; New Idea tobacco planter with 100 gallon tank; Black Rock one or two horse sprayer, 8 row booms and 100+ gallon tank; two auto-turn forecauts, one a Little Brittan; Bartville 6' scraper, with forecart mount; 28" saw and saw buck. Farmhand 5-wheel hay rake; JD 3 pt. hitch mower for parts; fore truck and wagon gear for parts; spring wagon, hyd. brakes, like new; power hacksaw; 7"x60" endless belt; 12V Gandy applicator, like new; steel wheels for New Idea manure spreader 10 HP Wisconsin engine with clutch.

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Dairying Equipment

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John K. King, Owner

Sale at 9:30 A.M.

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Lunch Available

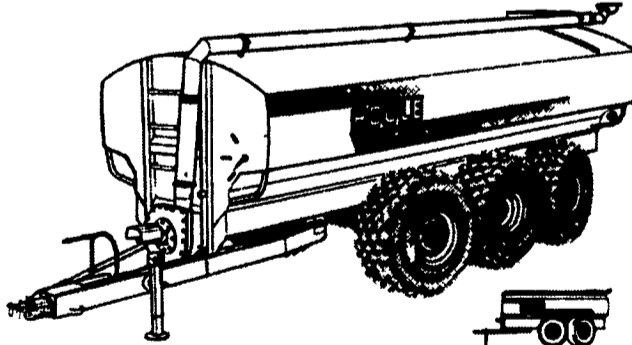
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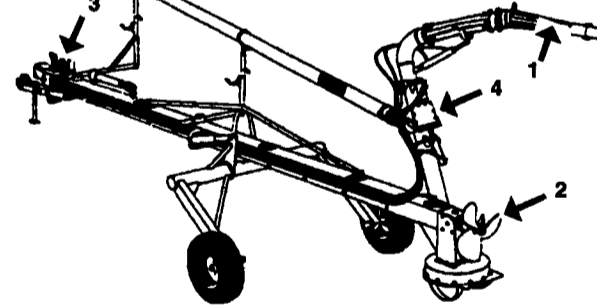
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