

Penn State Ag Council Gets New Name, Honors Retiring President

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implementation of its research, teaching, and extension responsibilities.

The council has the following objectives as part of the new by-laws:

- To convey to the College the needs, concerns, and support of the various constituents represented through each member organization;

- To bring from the agricultural community to the College ideas and suggestions for innovative ways in which the College can carry out its responsibilities;

- To provide quality feedback to the College on behalf of the entire agricultural community, represented through the member organizations as program initiatives are presented by the College for Council review;

- To advocate to the constituent groups represented by the member organizations the needs of the College for public and private support, and to motivate the agricultural community to work for that support;

- To educate individuals and groups outside the College and outside the industry about agricultural and related issues, and about College programs, in order to improve their understanding and to build public support.

Dean Lamartine Hood in his college update said undergraduate enrollment has increased 60 percent since 1989 and 11 percent since 1993. Now with more than

3,000 students, Penn State is the largest College of Agricultural Sciences among the Big 10 schools and ranks sixth nationally. Several majors have shown enormous growth in recent years. The Environmental Resources Management major, for example, has increased 300 percent in the last four years to 800 students.

While student numbers have increased, funding from the state has not. Forty-one percent of the College's operating budget comes from the Commonwealth. In 1987, an increase in state funding came for extension, and in 1989, research funding was increased. But since 1990, appropriations from the state have remained flat or as in one year, reduced. To meet increasing employment and program costs, programs have been cut and faculty, staff, administrative, and extension positions have been eliminated. The increase in number of students along with these reductions have caused a stress on the college system.

"This is really starting to have an effect on our college," Hood said. "I am concerned. Because of the enormous program stresses placed on our people as a result of this reduced budget.

"In spite of all the planning for program and cost cuts that we have done, it's hard to implement because of the spirit of commitment and service our people have. It's hard for a county agent to say no (when someone makes a request for help.)"

But with the improving economy and the estimates of surpluses in the commonwealth's budget, Hood sees a "window of opportunity" for the college. "I believe the money is available now to rebuild our system," Hood said. "If we don't get our share of this (surplus), I will be very distressed."

President Thomas said that his grandfather was a farmer and his father was superintendent of schools but his father also proved himself to be a good farmer. During the Depression, when for three years he was not paid at all, except in script, the family was fed from off the land. A large vegetable garden, fruit trees, home-raised broilers, a cow, and sometimes a pig provided the family's sustenance and the valuable lessons about values and what's important.

"I was born and grew up with the land-grant philosophy," Thomas said. "When I first came to Penn State, I was alarmed to learn that you had 32 trustees. I thought that was somewhere between a crowd and a mob. But the fact is, that having trustees from many different segments of the land-grant mission provides great strength. This diversity, strength, and continuity bodes well for the future."

Thomas said initiatives have been developed in recent years that he believes will position Penn State very well to capitalize on the opportunities of the future. "We have narrowed our focus a little because of financial problems," he said. "But on the highest priority items that are under way, the improving undergraduate teaching gives sharp focus to the importance of research, basic and applied. Our undergraduate students participate in research, and it becomes one of the most productive and important learning experiences for these stu-

dents. It's the kind of learning that I think is going to be most important to these young people as they move into problem-based society. They learn how to solve problems, learn how to find and use data, and learn how to learn.

"This is the kind of thrust that has positioned the University to serve the people well."

The next Council meeting is planned for October as part of a tour event between Harrisburg and the Berks Campus for legislators to become better acquainted with all that Penn State does for all the people of Pennsylvania.

Report Crops To CFSA

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — All USDA Consolidated Farm Service Agencies are accepting acreage reports for 1995 plants.

The reporting dates have changed for 1995.

Fall grains and orchards should be reported now.

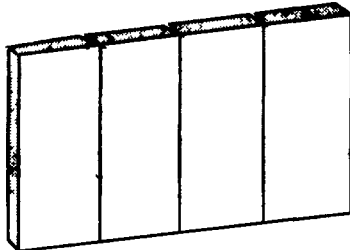
Spring seeded small grains, such as oats, should be reported by May 31, and other spring seeded crops must be reported by July 17.

In order to preserve a cropping history for the farm, or to be covered under USDA's risk management programs, reporting is necessary.

USDA is offering a non-insured assistance disaster program for certain crops in 1995. The protection afforded growers under this program is only offered if a timely acreage report is filed.

Contact a local CFSA office for more information.

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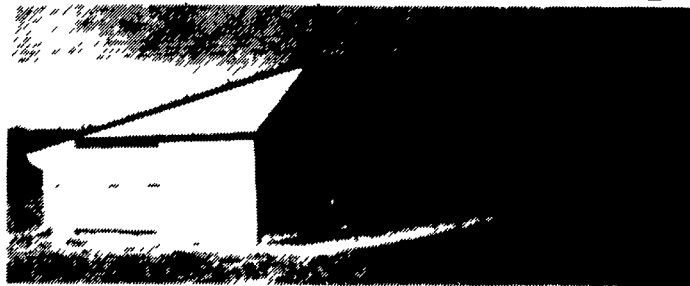
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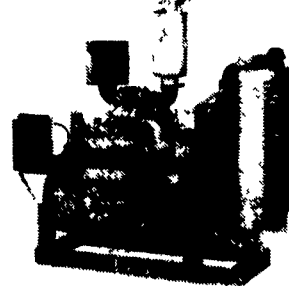
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