

Brosius, Zug At Agribusiness Breakfast

MYERSTOWN (Lebanon Co.) — Several prominent government officials were on hand at a breakfast meeting Wednesday morning to emphasize the importance of agriculture and agribusiness, especially in providing the opportunity for exports and in the use of Pennsylvania products for manufacturing.

Both Pennsylvania Ag Secretary Charles Brosius and State Representative Peter Zug attended the event sponsored by Farmer Boy Ag, Leon Hoover, president and CEO. Farmer Boy Ag is building poultry and hog facilities in 24 different states, and they have 40 people marketing throughout 96 countries. Projects are underway in Japan and Argentina with excellent prospects in Korea, Chile and Mexico.

Tim Mason, chief financial officer, said Farmer Boy Ag had sales that exceeded \$80 million in 1994, and this was a 100 percent increase from 1993. Of these sales, \$2 million was in foreign sales. The company has 350 employees.

Brosius said these foreign sales were examples of what the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture needs to do to help Pennsylvania farmers and agribusinesses

become more profitable.

"Leon Hoover is an American success story," Brosius said. "With initiative, hard work, and the opportunity, Farmer Boy Ag is the kind of business we are proud of in Pennsylvania Agriculture. It's this world class industry that Gov. Tom Ridge and I are committed to do whatever is necessary to keep agriculture on the cutting edge. We have the largest rural population in Pennsylvania, and we have tremendous opportunities."

John Reininger, Hatfield Quality Meats, said his company slaughters 1.7 million pigs each year and returns \$162 million to the pork producers. But 25 percent of their production is purchased outside of Pennsylvania, and he said this was only because their needs were greater than they can purchase locally. Reininger said the opportunity in Pennsylvania was increasing because Hatfield's capacity is 2.5 million hogs. He said their plant can grow and their goal is to promote agriculture locally.

Galen Kopp, Lebanon County agent, said agribusiness in the county employs 4,137 people and provides \$86.4 million in wages. He said hog production had



On tour of Farmer Boy Ag manufacturing facilities. From left, Greg Lentz, plant manager, Rep. Peter Zug, Ag Secretary, Charles Brosius, and Leon Hoover, president and CEO.

increased in the county by 35 percent since 1990 and noted that the poultry industry was also expanding and the top producing cow in the state in 1994 came from Lebanon County with a record of over

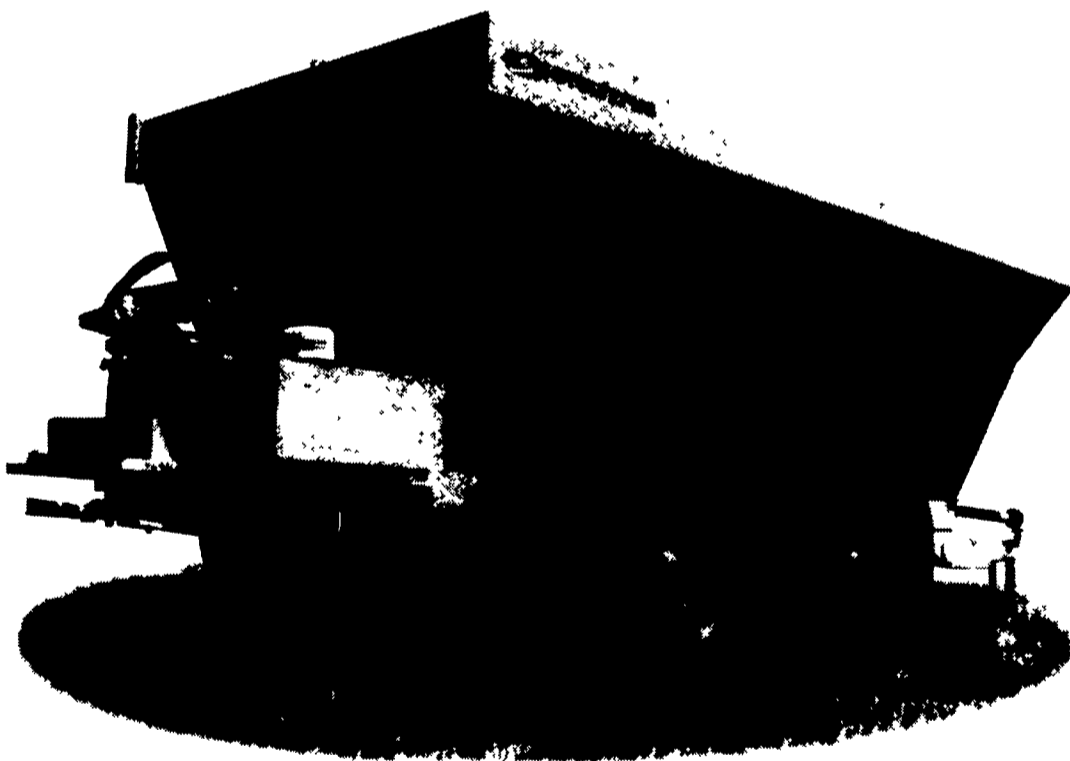
43,000 pounds of milk.

Zug complimented Gov. Ridge for allowing his cabinet to come out to meetings like this to meet with the people and hear about their needs. He said this was very

impressive and gave policy makers in Harrisburg a better handle on local situations across the state.

Following breakfast, everyone had the opportunity to tour the Farmer Boy manufacturing facilities.

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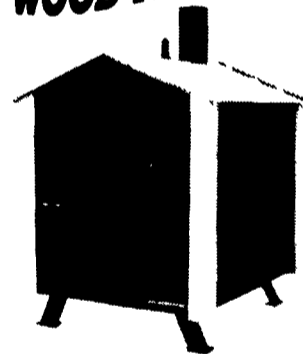
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