



Editor:
Today the Regional Infrastructure for Sustaining Agriculture (RISA) concluded a two-day meeting at the Black Rock Retreat Center. Unfortunately no one from the press was there. This was a dynamic group of people from the Southeastern part of PA with a concern for agriculture. The objective was to increase our understanding of, and define our common vision for the food system of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

This group had different aspects of agriculture represented by not only farmers, but faculty from several colleges, a land developer, food handlers, the Extension Service, the Brandywine Conservan-

cy, League of Women Voters, Rodale Institute and a variety of interests in agriculture.

We spent two days working on what we would like to see in the region in 2010. We see the need to work together. We have to be aware the region is beyond our farm or local township. Cities need to be made liveable. Food must be affordable to the poor of the country and at the same time the farmer must be able to make a profit. The profit would make it so that the farmer could pass on the farm to the next generation and that generation would see a reason to farm. Real estate taxes would not be the major support of the local schools. Our first exercise was to look at

the change in agriculture since 1930. It was obvious that change is very much a part of this period and that the world is becoming a smaller space. Boundaries do affect our markets, but NAFTA is affecting prices.

Ideally in 2010, we will be living together in harmony with room for the houses and farmers profitable because the local people are able to buy local produce. We will meet again and work on ways to get beyond the ideal and see how we can get the needed changes to take place. Hopefully the politicians can be aware of the importance of changing the tax system in a way that the school districts can raise needed revenue and the farmer and retired home owners won't have to pay an unfair share of this funding.

Suzanne P. Lamborn
Nottingham

Editor:

Stop Farm Welfare. It's time we stand up for ourselves. We heard the other night that farmers from several counties were going to

Harrisburg to lobby for a one dollar a hundred increase for five months. A one dollar increase for five months is only temporary; it's not enough. What we need is to demand our dairies increase the price to the consumer 10 cents a gallon each month for five months and then increase 10 cents a gallon each year to comply with cost of living increase; it is our product, our money they are working with. Sure the consumer will complain for awhile but they will buy it the same as gas which has gone up a dollar a gallon in the last 25 years and they still buy it; sometimes they buy more. This is true about most products we buy today, except farm products. Most workers are allowed a cost of living increase but not farmers. The government wants to keep taking from us and force us to accept their programs in order to live; this is another form of welfare; and they have more control over us than any other industry in this country.

We feel that if the price of milk

is up for us where we could make a living we wouldn't have to have government programs. It's not just dairy, there is also the meat farmer.

We don't know what it cost them to raise their product, but we do know that when we sell a bull calf, sometimes we don't get enough to pay for breeding.

Fifteen years ago the farmer got 49 cents of the retail dollar. Today the farmer only gets 22 cents. What we have outlined above will help offset this difference.

Americans need food to live and yet they pay less for it than any other product.

Let's get together and see what we can do.

Earl W. & Janet L. Ocker
Berlin

Editor's Note: This open letter to the President is reprinted at the request of the writer.

Dear President Clinton:

Hello! I am a dairy farmer in northeastern Pennsylvania.

My family is having trouble trying to make ends meet. We are milking Ayrshire cattle, and are a small part of this very large food chain. However, we are citizens of this great country.

I am 41 years old and have been in the agriculture business all my life. I've been married for 21 years and have two daughters. Our hearts are in the land and in producing the food for the United States, and the world. We also take pride in the fact that we are a part of the greatest nation in the world.

However, we are faced with a deck that is stacked against us. Our dairy industry insures all Ameri-

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PORK PRODUCTION FORUM

Wednesday, December 20, 1995

9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Country Table Restaurant

740 East Main Street, Mount Joy, PA

Program

- 9:30 - 10:00** Registration (Coffee & Donuts)
- 10:00 - 10:50** "Swine Nutrient Management"
Mike Brubaker, Nutrient Resource Management, Inc.
- 11:00 - 11:50** "Environmental Outlaw or Pork Producing Hero Facing Legal Challenges"
Greg Andrews - Attorney
Drake University - Ag Law Center
NPPC - Environmental Law Education
Coordinator
- 12:00 - 12:40** Free Buffet Lunch
- 12:40 - 1:00** Annual meeting and election of Pork Board
Nominees Vote on LanChester Pork Producers Bylaws
- 1:00 - 2:00** Choice of two seminars
A. Pork Quality Assurance Level III - Recertification
Dr. Tim Trayer
B. Pork Quality Assurance Level III - 1st time Certification
Dr. Robert Graybill
- 2:00 - 2:30** P.R.R.S. Update
Dr. Robert Graybill

Program Sponsored by:
LanChester Pork Producers
Ag Veterinary Associates
Dr. Robert Graybill

Forum Sponsored by:
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Elanco Animal Health
Merck Ag Vet

* Space is limited
Reservation Required
RSVP TO: (717)445-4501
Goods Livestock, Inc.
503 School Road
Denver, PA 17517

BY: December 15, 1995

* Forum Meeting limited to 16 years and older

* This meeting replaces LanChester Pork Producers Annual Banquet

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