

# Ag Industry Coalition Forms

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protecting humans from deadly disease can identify unrecognizable varieties of the bacteria) and the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and its New Bolton Center.

Without the formation of this system, the state's agricultural export industry will not be able to export much in a timely or cost-effective manner.

This is because disease and testing concerns are different for the different countries to which Pennsylvania products could be exported. If Pennsylvania has no certified testing system — which it didn't until receiving conditional approval last year — then testing must be done at certified laboratories in other states.

Having to deal with testing and approvals in distant laboratories, having to pay for the shipping of samples for testing, not being able to react quickly or get information about diseases here in a timely manner all combine to put the entire state agriculture industry at high risk.

It also puts the residents of Pennsylvania at high risk, because they live in close proximity to high densities of livestock.

Many livestock and wild animal diseases can be contracted by humans, such as rabies, tuberculosis, etc.

Without the constant testing done through the Animal Health Diagnostic System, without the current building mode of increasing the strength of diagnostic health services and without the achievement of extreme efficiencies that have been made, the state would not be enjoying its current situation of being on the threshold of achieving a sound, economically fruitful and health-assuring foundation for the state's agricultural business — its leading industry.

The Vet School is unique because of the range of services to food safety, to animal production technology and research, to companion animals, to human health research, and to nutrition and the environment.

There is work underway to study techniques in nutrition so as to reduce the amount of bypass nitrogen in manure.

Promising work is underway to determine how to feed animals best for production and to reduce the amount of nitrogen in their manure. If this can be done, there is

less nitrogen of concern that could possibly get into streams and groundwater and the Chesapeake.

Dean Kelly explained that compared to other state veterinary schools, it is already saddening that the best in the nation is mostly unaffordable to its residents because of a lack of state support.

Other state vet schools receive about 66 percent of their total funding from the state. The University of Pennsylvania Vet School has seen a high of 35 percent, but mostly half of what other states spend to support their vet schools.

At the same time, the tuition at the Vet School is one of the highest. The national average tuition for in-state students attending a vet school is \$6,485 (remember those states provides 66 percent of the school funding), whereas in-state student in Pennsylvania pay \$19,168, and that is with a \$1,100 scholarship grant.

The cost to out-of-state students to attend the Penn Vet School is \$24,102, while the national average for out-of-state students to attend a vet school is \$15,803.

According to Dean Kelly the governor's proposal could easily put the school out of business and that would be detrimental to the rest of the state's economy.

The point is that Gov. Ridge's proposed \$5.6 million reduction in state spending to support the Vet School is going to cause hundreds of millions more in lost income.

The school is primarily self-

sufficient, it has the highest number of published research, its depends heavily on research grants to pay its staff and it already uses tuition and fees to the public to operate.

The University has no money to give it, Kelly said. If the budget cut stays, the Vet School will decline.

In closing remarks, Guy Donaldson urged those representatives present to educate their peers and to urge the governor to relook at the situation and how much harm he would be doing to the state if his proposed cut is sustained.



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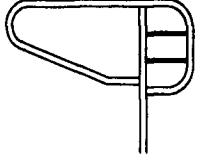
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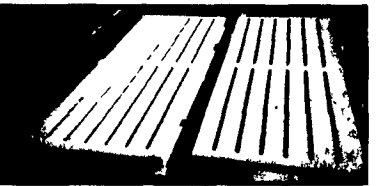
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