

USDA Names 46 Counties Disaster Areas

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Responding to Gov. Tom Ridge's request, the United States Department of Agriculture has designated 46 Pennsylvania counties as natural disaster areas.

In December, Gov. Ridge made the request because of the crop damage and reduced yields which were caused by drought conditions last summer and fall. Damage assessment reports were completed and confirmed by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service and the State Emergency Board.

State Agriculture Secretary Charles C. Brosius explained that this designation qualifies some family farmers for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans due to damages and losses caused by severe drought conditions, beginning one year ago.

"We are very pleased that Gov. Ridge's request for assistance to the commonwealth's number one industry has been honored, and that some farmers will now be eligible to receive assistance," Brosius said. "Last year was very difficult for Pennsylvania farmers as they saw their crops wither and die under the severe drought conditions we experienced in a large portion of the state.

"The drought, coupled with the severe winter of 1996, leaves some family farmers in a very difficult financial situation as they begin their 1996 growing season. This official declaration from the

Department of Agriculture will offer some support to our struggling farmers."

Brosius said that estimated Pennsylvania agriculture losses totaled nearly \$200 million due to drought damage.

The 46 counties included in the disaster designation are Allegheny, Beaver, Bedford, Bucks, Butler, Cambria, Cameron, Carbon, Centre, Chester, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Cumberland, Dauphin, Elk, Fayette, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, McKean, Mercer, Mifflin, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton,

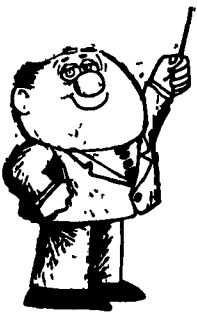
Northumberland, Pike, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Washington, Wayne and Westmoreland.

There were 20 additional Pennsylvania counties named as contiguous counties where eligible family farmers may qualify for FSA physical loss loan assistance, pursuant to provisions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

Those counties are Adams, Armstrong, Berks, Blair, Bradford, Columbia, Crawford, Delaware, Forest, Indiana, Montour, Perry, Philadelphia, Somerset, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren, Wyoming and York.

Applications for loans will be accepted through Nov. 12, 1996 for physical and production losses; applications pending on that day may be processed and completed.

Emergency loans will be made under the Farmers Home Administration. Brosius encouraged any farmers with questions to contact their local Farm Service Agency for details and applications for loans.



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AFB Elects Knill To National Board

(Continued from Page A1)

1996, stepped down from the AFBF board last month after serving for 10 years. His most recent term was to expire in January.

Mr. Knill, who lives with his wife, Jean, in Mount Airy, Carroll County, will continue to serve as Maryland Farm Bureau president. A lifelong farmer, Mr. Knill raises

beef cattle and grain crops on 350 acres.

He is the fourth Maryland Farm Bureau president to be elected to the national board.

Previous AFBF board members from Maryland were Roy Weagly from Washington County (MFB president, 1943-1946); Wilson Heaps from Harford County (1949 to 1956); and Willard Oakley of Wicomico County. Mr. Oakley who was Maryland Farm Bureau president from 1967 to 1972, was elected to the AFBF board in 1969.

Maryland Farm Bureau represents the interests of nearly 15,000 farm families across the state. It is one of 51 Farm Bureau organizations associated with the American Farm Bureau, which represents about 4.6 million farm families nationwide.

The American Farm Bureau is based in Park Ridge, Illinois. The AFBF Northeast region consists of 12 states: Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine.



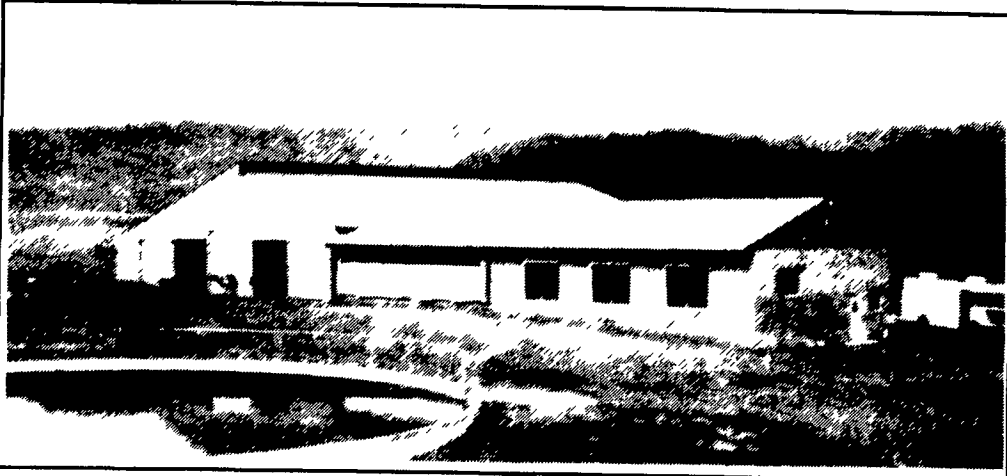
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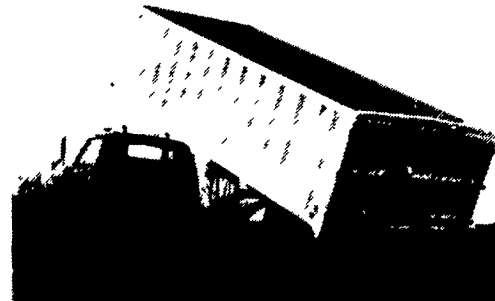
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