

State Officials Cut Ribbon

(Continued from Page A1)

To help combat that concern, the state created the Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System (PADLS). PADLS is a tripartite system utilizing the reference sources, research techniques, and facilities of the state Department of Agriculture, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Pennsylvania.

The goal of PADLS is to provide pathology and clinical pathology services such as necropsy, histopathology, immunohistochemistry, poultry pathology, clinical chemistry, hematology and aquacultural pathology; bacteriology and mycology work such as detecting and identifying bacteria and fungi, working with Lyme disease, DNA probes, serotyping of E. coli bacteria (especially important with new regulations concerning slaughter and meat packing), and Salmonella testing; and virology, such as isolating and identifying viruses, using electron microscopy, and studying transmission.

According to Dr. Sherbyn Ostrich, of Robesonia, the interim director of the state Animal Health and Diagnostic Commission, while partial accreditation has been received by the state, the completion of the new state diagnostic laboratory puts the state in position to receive full accreditation. He said he expects to seek a review in the second quarter of 1997.

While completion of the labor-

atory was one of the provisions of the partial accreditation given by the accrediting organization — the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians Accreditation Committee — Ostrich said there are others.

"A second proviso was to have an animal toxicology center up and running. The Legislature in the last budget approved \$400,000 to allow that to happen. That facility is to be at New Bolton Center," Ostrich said.

Ostrich said a third proviso is to have a computer system linking the three laboratory entities to the efficiency of one.

On top of the in-state expertise, Ostrich said that the environment among diagnostic laboratories, departments of agriculture and universities is one of mutual support. He said to expect a sharing of technology and expertise from around the country — from Cornell University to Ames, Iowa, to California and Texas — so that Pennsylvania may seek additional expertise or special tests that have been developed elsewhere to help solve immediate problems here.

"There are no secrets. We want to keep America's agriculture clean. We will always cooperate. (Other states) may also send things in for review," he said.

"With the opening of this laboratory, we will have access to state-of-the-art service throughout the commonwealth."

A delivery service has also been contracted to help animal owners,



Pennsylvania's new animal health diagnostic laboratory serves to house a number of laboratories and contains specimen receiving, testing and storage areas. It is a key link in the Pennsylvania tripartite animal health diagnostic system, in cooperation with research and facilities at University of Pennsylvania's New Bolton Center and Pennsylvania State University. The lab gives the state's agriculture industry an inhouse testing facility to help fulfill the requirements for export testing, and should help stimulate business, as well as the ability to help prevent the spread of disease among livestock and among people.

veterinarians and others with problems send samples to the Harrisburg lab or elsewhere in the tripartite for testing. Contact the PDA for more information.

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, Secretary Brosius acknowledge the work done by his predecessors, making special note of efforts by former Secretary Boyd Wolff to head up and support the development of the PADLS, and to seek legislative support.

"Our diagnostic lab is an outstanding investment in Pennsylvania's number one industry," Brosius said Monday to the large crowd under tent in front of the new laboratory.

"Of agriculture's \$3.73 billion in annual cash receipts, and \$40 billion in related economic activity in the commonwealth, animal agriculture is the largest and most profitable sector, representing 56 percent of farm income."

In addressing the large crowd of

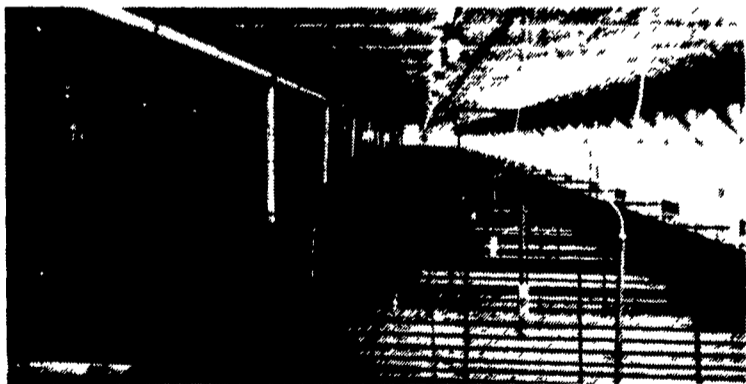
legislators, agricultural organization representatives, staff and PDA employees, Gov. Ridge said, "For over 300 years, agriculture has played an important role in Pennsylvania's development," Ridge said. "there is an intimate connection between Pennsylvania and agriculture. With the opening of this new lab, that connection will continue into the 21st century."

"There is little doubt it will be one of the premier laboratories in the United States," he said.

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