

# Tobacco Farmers Establish Marketing Auction

**EVERETT NEWSWANGER**  
Managing Editor

**INTERCOURSE** (Lancaster Co.) — A large room full of 340 Amish farmers along with a few non-Amish met last Friday morning to approve both the establishment of the Pennsylvania Tobacco Marketing Cooperative and to approve the bylaws as presented. This unopposed vote gave the nine newly elected board members the go-ahead to conduct the business of the cooperative, establish an auction for tobacco, rent an auction barn, establish a line of credit, and contact southern buyers to come to the sales.

Jane Balmer, who has spearheaded the effort to get the farmer cooperative running, told the meeting that they have 5.3 million pounds of tobacco under contract, but they have no guarantee the buyers will come. It can be noted that buyers have expressed interest in coming, but have not gone public with these indications. The

cooperative had 438 members as of the organization meeting. Other farmers have until the end of December to join the cooperative, at which time membership will be closed. Members will pay three cents per pound to market their tobacco through the cooperative and nonmembers will pay six cents. In addition, everyone will 4 cents per pound for the rental of the building.

Balmer expressed hope that they could have an auction in the first week of January, but this depends on everything coming together.

Elected directors include, Daniel S. King, Daniel S. Diener Jr., Daniel B. Zook, Lawrence Martin, Victor Dohner, Jane Balmer, Michael Mellott, Eugene Nolt, and Larry Weaver. Dennis Hess will be the general manager.

Following the directors organized with Jane Balmer elected president, Lawrence Martin, vice president, and Daniel S. King, secretary/treasurer.



This room full of mostly Amish tobacco farmers met last Friday morning to establish the Pennsylvania Tobacco Marketing Cooperative and to approve the bylaws to establish the working of the new cooperative. Photo by Everett Newswanger, managing editor.



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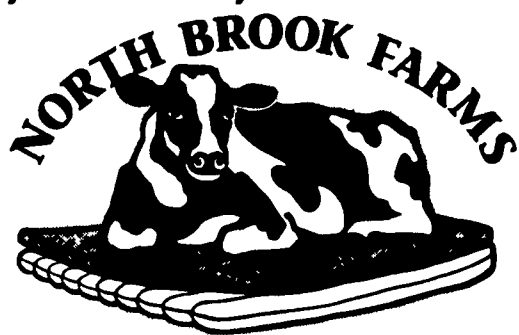
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