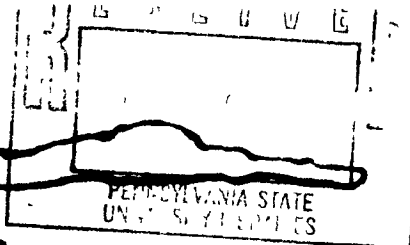


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Lancaster Farming

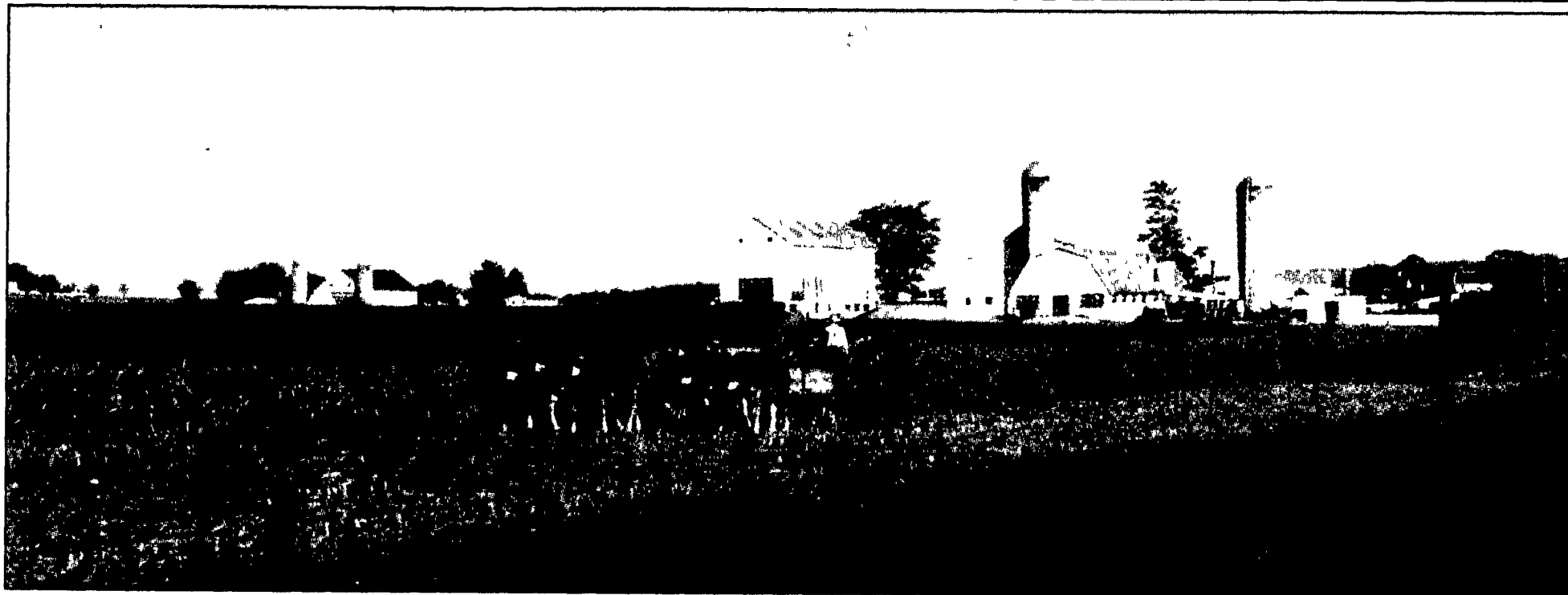
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Harvesting of corn and soybeans accelerated this week after rains last week brought an end to the drought but not an end to the shortage of corn, and hay to feed livestock over the winter. Many farmers were filling silos with corn that would have been normally reserved for grain. According to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, the corn crop is slow in maturing and harvest is also behind normal. On a better note, old crop carryover stocks of corn, wheat, and barley are above last year to help keep the supply in line with demand. But a lot of grain will be shipped to local markets from the Midwest. The late rains have slightly

increased pasture conditions but many meadows are still not growing because of the stress placed on them by the summer drought. Fruit harvest around the state continues. Small apple size was reported. The quality of apples and grapes was generally good. The cool weather crops benefited from the recent precipitation, but frost brought an end to the growing season for most vegetable crops. In the photo, an Amish farmer on Pond Road north of Rt. 340, between Bird in Hand and Intercourse, harvests corn with teams pulling both the corn binder and the wagon to fill silo Tuesday afternoon. —Photo by Everett R. Newswanger, editor.

Being Empathetic With Consumers Critical To Poultry Industry's Public Affairs

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff

MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) — These days, according to one media affairs specialist, people don't trust big business. They want environmental pollution controls but don't want to pay for them.

People — indicates M. Patricia Wood, senior account manager for William J. Green & Associates — are fickle. They want environmentally safe products — even say, on surveys, they'll pay for them — but when it comes time to pay, they don't.

For the agricultural industry to survive, and to curtail litigation, keep financially strapping regulations away, and to handle assaults in the media from an increasingly ignorant consumer population, producers must learn to be proactive, good communicators, and

learn to be "empathetic with your audience," Wood told about two dozen poultry producers and agri-industry representatives Monday afternoon.

Wood, senior account manager for William J. Green & Associates, Hummelstown, works with the PennAg Industries Association, Ephrata, in helping member-producers with public affairs. Wood spoke Monday at the Penn State-sponsored Poultry Management and Health Seminar at Kreider's Restaurant in Manheim.

Wood pointed to a heavily criticized story appearing in a newspaper that made agriculture, in general, bad guys for consumers and the environment.

To counter sudden attacks for an increasingly vulnerable industry, according to Wood, it is important to have a strategy that is positive

and pro-active. The strategy should paint a picture of farming that is progressive, active in the community, and can respond to crisis situations and emotionally charged issues readily and with confidence. It's also important to cultivate relationships with the media that don't emphasize cold,

big business — rather, family owned and operated farms where farming is the major income source.

Today's family-run "advanced farms" rely on advanced techniques and efficiencies in feeding, livestock health, pest control, nutrient management, and other

areas.

"We don't think this industry has anything to apologize for," Wood said at the meeting. The important thing, she said, is to learn how to be better communicators and to be "empathetic with your audience."

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Food Safety Biosensor Detects Pathogens

ATLANTA, Ga. — Recent incidences of contaminated meat in grocery stores and restau-

rants have heightened consumer concern. But people who eat meat may rest easier if a new

bacterial sensing device to be field tested this fall delivers the accurate and speedy results, plus the low costs its developers predict.

The device, called a biosensor, was developed at the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI). It can simultaneously identify species and determine concentrations of multiple pathogens — including the deadly E. coli 0157:H7 and Salmonella — in food products in less than two hours while in operation on a processing plant floor.

The most significant advantage of the biosensor is the time reduction in assessing the presence of contamination, said Nile Hartman, a biosensor developer and senior research engineer at GTRI.

Lab tests for E. coli and Salmonella in meat are required by federal regulators, but there are no standards for bacterial concentration. Most companies

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Editor:

This letter is in response to your article regarding House Bill 1418, legislation that I sponsored to amend the Veterinary Practice Act of 1974.

Although I believe that an update of the 25-year-old law is appropriate, I am now convinced

that the language of House Bill 1418 is too vague and all encompassing in its present form.

This expanded definition of the practice of veterinary medicine was designed and intended to protect consumers from being victimized by purveyors of vet-

(Turn to Page A10)



New wine grape agent at Penn State, Mark Chien, left, examines Vidal, a French white hybrid grape, at Nissley Winery and Vineyards near Bainbridge. At right is Tim Elker, Lancaster horticulture agent. Read more about the new agent on page A32. Photo by Andy Andrews