

Cooperative Directors To Meet At Penn State

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — New and returning directors of cooperatives can improve their business and organizational skills by attending the 16th Annual Pennsylvania Cooperative Director Institute, Jan. 26-28 at The Penn State Conference Center Hotel at Penn State's University Park campus.

The director's role in creating, maintaining, and communicating the value of cooperatives will be the focus of the institute, which features more than 15 sessions and informal discussions on topics such as cooperative finance, legal issues for cooperative directors, developing internal controls, and environmental concerns. Speakers will include Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Samuel Hayes; Glenn Webb, chairman of the board for GROWMARK Cooperative; and John Coffey, cooperative consultant and former head of Southern States Cooperative.

Changes in markets and the legislative environment make this institute increasingly important, said Richard Poorbaugh, director of Penn State's Cooperative Business Education and Research Program.

"The directors' institute helps close the knowledge and skills gaps between members, their boards and investor-oriented agribusinesses," Poorbaugh said. "One of the highlights of the institute is the opportunity to share ideas and issues with directors of other cooperatives."

The institute opens with lunch and welcoming comments at noon on Wednesday, Jan. 26, followed by Coffey's keynote address on "Co-op Boards for the Next Century: What Will It Take?" Jerry Ely, cooperative development specialist for the USDA Cooperative Business Service, will discuss "Cooperative Governance — Roles and Responsibilities of Directors and the Board" at 2:30 p.m. That will be followed by "Legal Implications of Directorship," by Chris Fox, general legal counsel of Agway Inc., an 80,000-member farm supply cooperative.

Russ Rose, head coach of the national champion Penn State Lady Lions volleyball team, will be the speaker at dinner at 6 p.m. The day's activities will end with a workshop on cooperative board decision-making procedures.

On Thursday, Jan. 27, Porter Little of Co-Bank, a major lending institution for cooperatives, will present a workshop on cooperative finances at 8:30 a.m. At 1:30 p.m., Glenn Webb of Growmark cooperative will discuss "Selling Your Cooperative: the Value of Membership." Webb then will join William

Nelson of Cenex-harvest States cooperatives supply firm; Irene Sorenson, manager of grower communications for Ocean Spray; and Robert Naerebout of Dairy Farmers of America, in a panel discussion of "Measuring Membership Value" at 3 p.m. Dinner will follow at 6:30 p.m., when Nelson will present "With Cooperatives, the Three Most Important Things Are: Education, Education, Education!"

Friday, Jan. 28 sessions open at 8 a.m. with James Dunn, Penn State professor of agricultural economics, discussing "Trends and Current Business Environment" for cooperatives. At 8:45 a.m., the institute will offer concurrent sessions for smaller-scale cooperatives ("Is There a Future for Local Co-Ops?") and large operations ("Challenges and Requisites of Serving and Communicating

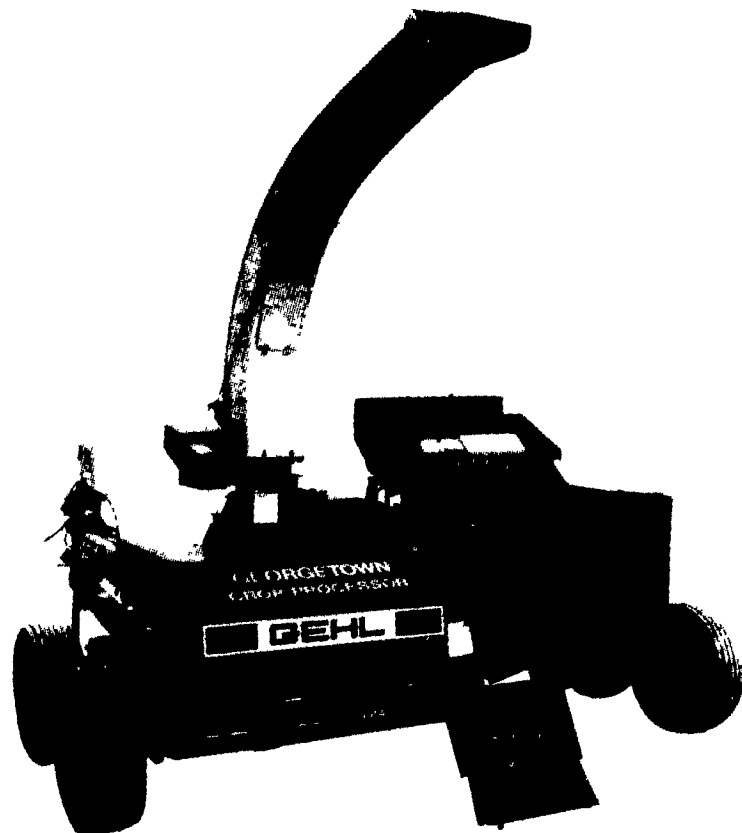
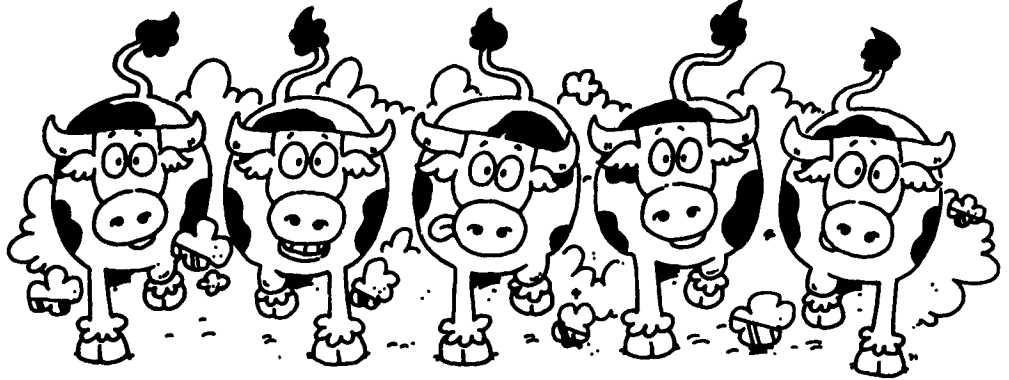
Membership Value to a Diverse Membership"). At 10:45 a.m., William Nelson will present "Ten Steps to Excellence in Leadership and Governance."

At noon, the institute's graduation luncheon will feature remarks by Secretary Hayes. That will be followed at 1 p.m. by Samuel Minor, director of Agway Inc., who will talk about "Managing the

Madness: Capitalizing on the Opportunity." The institute will close at 2 p.m. with the presentation of certificates by Secretary Hayes and David Blandford, head of Penn State's department of agricultural economics and rural sociology.

Registration, lodging, meals and materials for the three-day institute are \$625. For more infor-

mation, contact Penn State's Cooperative Business Education and Research Program at (814) 863-0644. The institute is offered in cooperation with Pennsylvania Council of Cooperatives and the Cornell Cooperative Enterprise Program with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.



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