

Unity Rally Draws Attention

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Bureau. One of the issues that a number of the speakers addressed was the problem of townships passing ordinances to limit agricultural growth.

"These actions cannot be taken as idle threats," said Donaldson. "If you limit our ability to grow, you also limit our ability to stay in business."

Another issue many speakers addressed was the need for understanding between agriculture and the surrounding community.

Jim Adams, president of PennAg Industries, said, "today we stand united with the future of agriculture in our hands. We must become more involved in our communities, with our neighbors, in education, in the news media, and even in the political process."

"We battle misplaced fear and misunderstanding. Too many people take for granted

that their food is going to magically appear at their grocery store. Too many people are swayed by junk science and twisted research.

"We must help people understand agriculture. That is our job. Our success or failure will determine whether we can continue to put food on people's tables and whether our sons and daughters can make a living by feeding their fellow man."

In addition, "too few people know what goes on in the barn or in the field," said William Steele, master, Pennsylvania State Grange. Many citizens do not understand the correlation between flowing wheat fields and the loaf of bread at the store.

"They don't know the high cost of time, money, and effort to produce raw supplies," Steele said. "We stand united today as organizations for those who produce agriculture products."

Sen. Roger Madigan is the sponsor of Senate Bill 826, a bill

that would require townships to reimburse legal costs to farmers who successfully challenge illegal township ordinances in court.

Although hog farmers are perhaps facing the most challenge in expanding or beginning operations, in the future other farmers will also come under fire, warned Madigan, if these ordinances are unchecked.

"Our local government has no right to discriminate against farms," he said. "Otherwise we run the risk that not only hog farmers but other operations would be opposed. Today, Saddam Hussein said that he will not export oil to America for 30 days. If we become dependent on food from across the ocean, we could have that same problem with food."

"The bottom line of much of the controversy against farms stems from misunderstanding," said Madigan. "We need to start a real dialogue between farmers and their neighbors."

Craig Richard, Elysburg, has faced the issue of restrictive ordinances firsthand. Richard,



Craig Richard, Elysburg, has faced restrictive ordinances and spoke during the afternoon event.

who began his speech by reading zoning laws and ordinances from the township supervisors, has a livestock and grain farm in Northumberland County.

"Farmers need animal production alternatives," he said. He has 150 animal units on his farm and cannot expand. A neighboring dairy farmer, he

said, cannot expand and include his son in the operation.

The ordinance, he said, sets a dangerous precedent for other townships. "We need legislation with teeth to hold responsible" supervisors, he said. According to Richard his son has seen the small profit margin, beside re-

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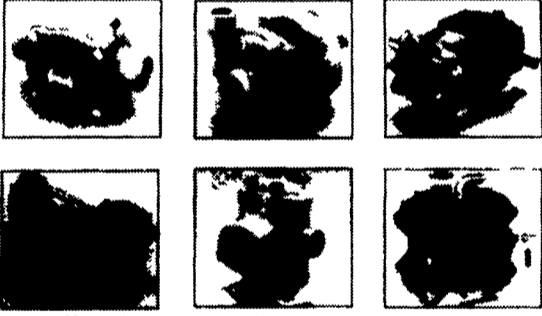
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