

Agro 2003, Opening Ceremonies Highlight New, Improved Farm Show

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Editor

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — "Wait until you see it," Gov. Mark Schweiker told more than 1,200 gathered in the large banquet room late last week at the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers. "We're going to show you a building that will give you the same feelings you had in your belly when you were a little boy."

Late last week, Schweiker referred to the more than \$86 million spent on the major new Farm Show Complex additions and renovations during the Pennsylvania Farm Show Agro 2003 International Celebration. This was a day before the Grand Opening of the 2003 Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Schweiker also reminded more than 200 international agri-industry guests from 76 countries that the Farm Show provides a real showcase of the "might of Pennsylvania farming, agribusiness, and farm families."

Agro 2003 is the annual kick-off event for the eight-day long new and expanded Farm Show. The Farm Show is not only about the business of farming, Schweiker noted, but shows the "grit and determination to till the soil and grow the enterprise," he said. The farm life "is more than a paycheck and a means to a living — it is an honorable way of life."

Schweiker capped the two-day event with an introduction to Farm Show visitors in the Large Arena on opening day last Saturday.

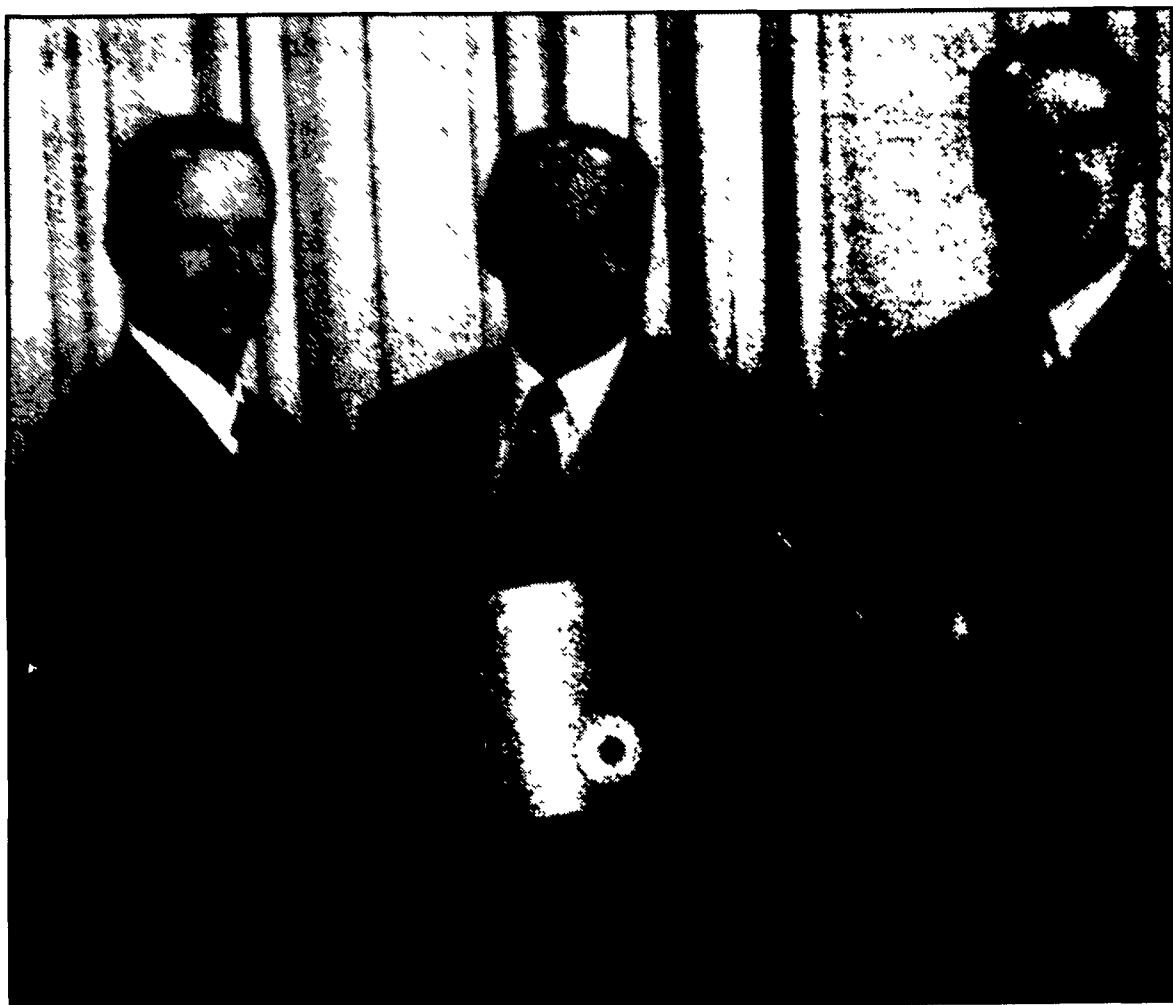
But the evening before the Farm Show officially opened, Agro 2003 honored businesses and related agri-industry throughout the state, in addition to international agribusiness.

Schweiker recounted his experiences in dealing with rural Pennsylvania during the Quecreek Mine Disaster last August, when "nine for nine" miners were rescued after a cave-in, and what that taught him.

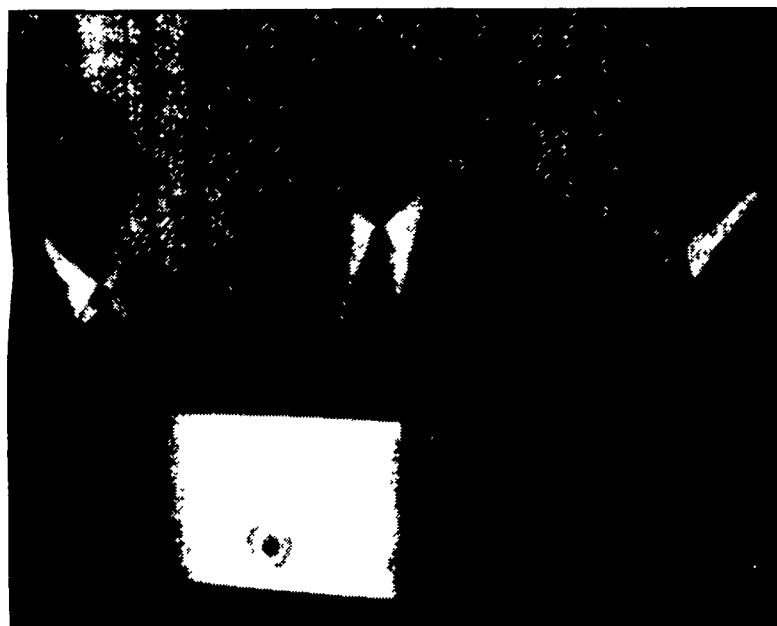
The advantage, he told those at Agro 2003, was the "built-in value system" of rural Pennsylvania. Schweiker said, "Some countries don't know that value system...but they know it's fruitful, they know it pays off. It's part of our collective energy, part of our collective psyche."

No country can outdo that determination and personal spirit, no one can "outdo the Pennsylvania farmer," he told the visitors. With eyes brimming with tears, Schweiker recounted eight years with the current administration (assuming the leadership role as former Gov. Tom Ridge was announced as President George Bush's appointment to head the

(Turn to Page A30)



Turner Dairy was honored at Agro 2003 last week. From left, Sam Hayes, state secretary of agriculture; Chuck Turner Sr.; and Chuck Turner Jr.



First Union Bank was honored during Agro 2003. From left, Sam Hayes, state secretary of agriculture; Darvin Boyd, senior vice president, director of Agri-Finance, First Union Bank; and Roger Rohrer, vice president, business banking senior relationship manager, First Union Bank.



Agriculture commodity representatives gather for the reception at the start of Agro 2003 late last week.

Swine Co-Op Honors Itle



HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Charles Itle, Farm Show livestock show manager, right, was honored with the Pennsylvania Swine Co-Op Outstanding Service Award by Rodger Bankert, Hanover, last Saturday at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. The award was presented before the start of the bred gilt sale in the new Sale Arena. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor



The state police color guard at this year's Grand Opening at Farm Show.