

Rendell Picks Columbia County Dairyman As New Ag Secretary

(Continued from Page A1)

Rendell made the announcement Thursday morning in the dairy barn at the Farm Show Complex. He also named a new secretary to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and renominated the incumbent secretary of corrections.

Wolff is a third-generation family member on the 700-acre Millville farm where he manages about 500 Holsteins, including a 100-cow milking herd. He specializes in purebred Holstein genetics, and exports embryos and cattle to various countries around the world.

Wolff serves on the World Trade Organization's agricultural technical committee, which provides input on WTO agricultural policies. He also served from 1997 to 2001 on the Pennsylvania Farm Service Agency Committee.

"I like a challenge, and this will be one," Wolff said of his new appointment as ag secretary. "I think I have a good understanding of the needs of farmers in Pennsylvania."

Wolff will be taking over the position held by outgoing ag secretary Sam Hayes.

Rendell said he chose Wolff because he is a professional farm-



Governor-elect Ed Rendell introduces Dennis Wolff, left, as the new Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture Thursday morning at the Farm Show.

er who is also experienced in the state, national, and world ag community.

"Dennis will be a good manager who will help to accomplish the three-fold mission of preserving Pennsylvania farmland, increasing profitability for farmers, and helping farmers export their products," he said.

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) supported Wolff's appointment.

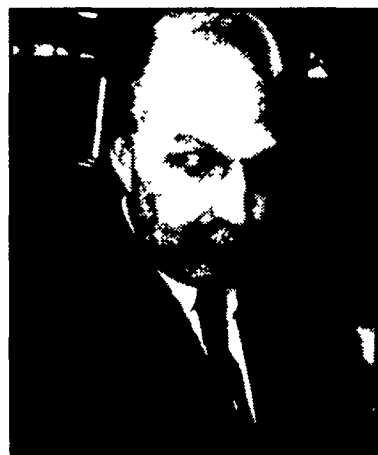
"Dennis Wolff is an outstanding choice," said Guy Donaldson, PFB president. "We're pleased that Governor-elect Rendell recruited a person with strong leadership, diverse experience, and notable achievement in production agriculture."

Dennis Wolff is not related to

Boyd Wolff, who served as ag secretary under the Casey administration.

Michael DiBerardinis, former Philadelphia Recreation Commissioner, was Rendell's choice for the new secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. As secretary of the DCNR, DiBerardinis's responsibilities will include maintaining 116 state parks, managing 2.1 million acres of state forest, and establishing community conservation partnerships.

Rendell Thursday morning also renominated Dr. Jeffery Beard to the post of secretary of corrections.



Dennis Wolff talks to reporters Thursday morning after being named the new Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture.

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HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Jake Wheeler of Somerset was surprised when his 262-pound crossbred was named youth grand champion hog Monday at the Farm Show.

"I didn't expect it," he said. "I'm very pleased and excited."

Wheeler, 15, has been showing hogs for two years. At last year's Farm Show, he exhibited a Duroc that placed second in its class. That's a notable honor, but nothing quite like taking home the banner for the top pig in the show.

Wheeler is a sophomore at Somerset Area High School and a member of the High Ridge 4-H Club. He is the son of Paul and Stacy Wheeler.

His champion hog was a Yorkshire/Pietrain cross.

Valerie Svonavec of Rockwood, Somerset County, exhibited the overall reserve champion, also a crossbred hog. Valerie's parents are Vince and Donna Svonavec.

Jim McCoy of Ohio judged eight pure breeds of market swine as well as a large show of crossbreds. He complimented the

(Turn to Page A39)



Jake Wheeler, left, with his grand champion swine and Sam Hayes, secretary of agriculture.



Valerie Svonavec, reserve champion swine, with judge Jim McCoy, left, and Sam Hayes.

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