

Ag Secretary Vows To Work For All Pa. Farmers

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ernment and public institutions. He has served on various agencies at local, state, and federal levels.

In fact, he seemed remarkably relaxed when he shared with *Lancaster Farming* his views on agriculture and his new job of managing a department with 650 employees and a \$200 million operating budget.

Boosting profitability for Pennsylvania farmers will be his top priority — one that will be applied all types of farmers, Wolff promised.

"In the ag world today, there are two ways to continue to farm — stay at the size you are and be as efficient as you can, or grow and expand," he said. "We'll work with all farms. Farmers should have either option. They should have equal rights to do those things."

Wolff said there are various ways to enhance the livelihood of farmers in the state. These include promoting domestic and foreign markets for Pennsylvania products and educating the non-farm public about modern agriculture.

Some areas in the ag department will be redefined in order to organize new local marketing initiatives, according to Wolff.

Wolff said he supports free trade — under the condition that agricultural products coming into the U.S. are not subsidized by foreign governments and meet the same sanitary standards that are required here. A better term for that is "fair trade," he said.

"I'm in favor of tariffs (on imports), as long as they are used to

generate money and do not discriminate against the product," he said.

Educating the public about farming is another of Wolff's major concerns.

"With under two percent of the population being farmers, we have less people who can relate to what a modern farming operation is like."

Wolff said he will work to enhance public relations by increasing programs in which the public can visit working farms. He also said he would encourage more agriculture in elementary and high school classes.

He supports Gov. Ed Rendell's initiative to make low interest loans available to farmers under the small business program.

"This administration wants to continue to follow through with the concept of farmers as small businesses," he said. "We want to treat farmers like we treat the rest of the businesses in Pennsylvania."

Wolff said he supports the concept behind the now-expired Senate Bill 1413, which would have allowed farmers to be reimbursed for legal fees when successfully suing townships for ordinances that curb expansion of livestock operations.

He is also in favor of lowering property taxes as well as continuing to preserve Pennsylvania farmland.

Wolff is the third generation of his family on Pen-Col Farms. His parents, Chris and Pearl, and his grandparents moved from Quarryville, Lancaster County, to the farm near Millville in the early 1950s. The family kept a herd of Guernseys until the mid-1970s

when they switched to Holsteins and began to focus on developing purebred genetics and marketing bulls.

Wolff and his father began doing embryo transfer work in 1978, when this technique was still in its early stages. Today, Wolff markets Holsteins to countries around the world, with France, England, Japan, and Holland at the top of the list.

"Production and functional type" are the goals of the breeding program on Pen-Col Farms, Wolff said. He employs seven workers to manage the 700-acre, 500-cow operation, including a 100-cow milking herd.

Since 1987, Wolff has been engaged in a joint venture with American Breeders Service, Inc., Madison, Wis., where he is involved in sampling and marketing Holstein genetics internationally. He also partners with Grosvenor Farm, U.K., in developing Holsteins for the international market.

In appointing Wolff to the secretary of agriculture post, Gov. Rendell referred to Wolff's history as a professional farmer and his experience in the state, national, and international ag community.

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

Wolff's involvement in public service include:

- From 1997 to 2001, he was a member of the USDA's Farm Service Agency committee in Pennsylvania.



Wolff is preparing this 2-year-old Holstein, Pen-Col Aaron Cindy, for her first type classification this week.

- Since 1999, Wolff served on the agriculture technical committee of the World Trade Organization.

- From 1988 to 1998, Wolff was on the Pennsylvania Animal Health and Diagnostic Commission — instrumental in launching the Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostics Laboratory System.

- Wolff joined Pennsylvania Dairy Stakeholders board of directors in 2002.

- He has served with the Penn State Board of Trustees since 2001.

- Since 1986, he has been president of the Nicholas Wolff Foundation and Camp Victory, a

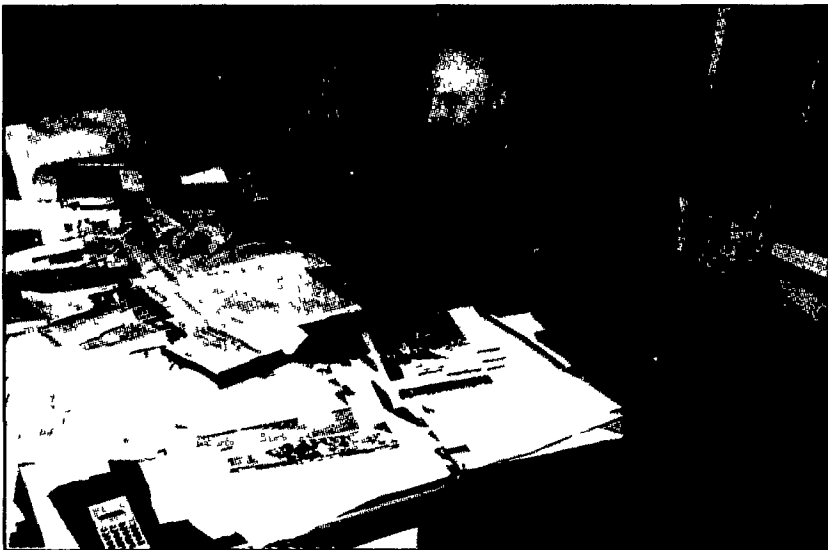
non-profit summer camp for handicapped and chronically ill children.

- From 1986-1992, he served on the Greenwood Township Planning Commission.

- Wolff served on Northern Central Bank board of directors from 1981-1996.

- Since 1986, he has served on the Millville Mutual Insurance Company board of directors.

Wolff is the father of five children and has been divorced for eight years. His oldest son, Corey, runs a Holstein export business near Mount Joy, Lancaster County.



Dennis Wolff, newly-appointed Pennsylvania ag secretary, ties up some loose ends at his farm office this week prior moving to the Department of Ag building in Harrisburg.

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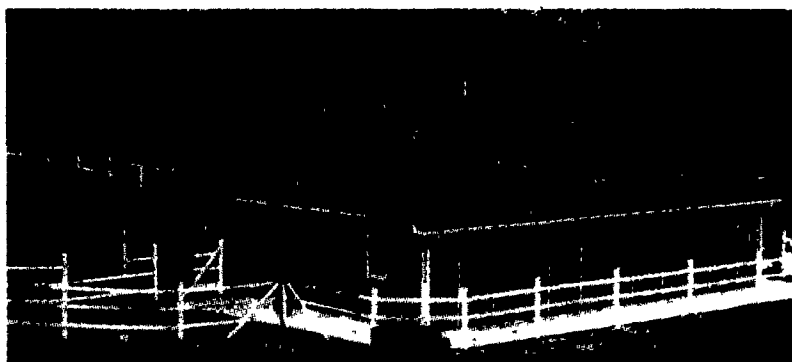
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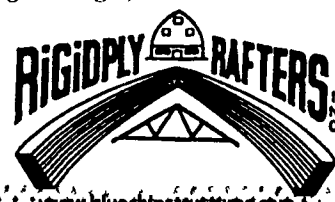
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