

Farmers review new taxation report

Farm assessments and the newly-released Select Committee on Taxation came in for heavy scrutiny Wednesday, when Halton Federation of Agriculture executive and property committee spent two hours discussing the vital subjects with Halton East M.P.P. Jim Snow.

Snow, a member of the Select Committee which last week defined a "working farm" and set out new guidelines for future taxation of farms, went through the Select Committee's remarks on farm taxation in detail.

Although the committee's ideas on taxing working farms, which meet certain production standards was met with general favor, the farmers found no help

on their current problem. A county-wide reassessing program that has been in the wind for the past two years will see their farm land assessments doubling and tripling throughout Halton this year, and the 1968 assessments are what the 1969 taxation will be based upon.

The M.P.P. admitted he didn't have any answers for the assessment hike. He noted the entire "Golden Horseshoe" area of Ontario was having assessing problems, mostly due to the high value of farm land as evidenced by "speculators' prices paid in recent years."

A week earlier, 275 Halton farmers had jammed into the Masonic Hall near Milton to hear County Assessor Robert Beach

and the assessors of Oakville, Burlington, Esqueping and Nassagaweya outline why land assessments were going up this year. They decided to carry a mass protest right up to the Ontario Municipal Board, if necessary.

Following Wednesday's meeting with Mr. Snow, the executive and property committee of the Federation met at length with solicitor Ray Plant to prepare a protest which will start with appeals against assessment increases at the municipal level.

Mr. Snow told the meeting how the Smith Report on Taxation and the Select Committee report differed. Smith wanted to drop all special

concessions for farmers from the Assessing Act, but the Select Committee rejected his idea "as we felt this would force the farmers from the land," Snow said. Lack of services in rural areas is the main reason farmers are receiving concessions, and "we found no justification for a farmer to pay for services that are not provided."

If the Select Committee report is accepted, farm dwellings will be assessed as residential properties because they are not part of the "working farm". A man at the meeting protested this would increase a farmhouse assessment by 40 per cent—"I think it means more damn taxes, and a lot more too," he said.

A working farm is one that produces \$3,000 of gross produce annually, (or \$30 an acre if over 100 acres), the M.P.P. explained. While this figure may not be applicable throughout all of Ontario, some guideline was needed and that figure was set. A county or regional Farm Classification Board (with three members appointed to it by the Department of Agriculture) will sit in each area to sort out disputes and this board might even apply a different figure than \$30 an acre and the \$3,000 minimum, Mr. Snow intimated.

The Select Committee decided not to discriminate against the farmer who drives a sander, plow or school bus on a part time basis to gain extra income—he will still be classed as a farmer if he operates a farm that meets the production requirements. Flower growers and sod farms will not be classed as farmers because they do not produce food, he said.

Cattle and livestock operations are included as farms if their excess of sales over purchases is \$3,000 worth of hay to feed the horses. Greenhouses which produce tomatoes or cucumbers, broiler farms, turkey farms and mushroom growers are classed as farmers because they produce food, he said.

A speculator who buys land to hold it can only enjoy farmers' tax rates if he keeps his land producing the minimum requirement, or rents it to a farmer who keeps it in production. "One of our concerns is to keep the land in production," Snow explained.

"Farmers are doing a lot of speculating themselves," Snow reminded the meeting. He urged the Federation to put in a brief either supporting or speaking against the Select Committee report. The property committee of H.F.A. was urged to study it and report back to the executive soon.

Ray Cunningham of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture also attended the meeting. He said he was concerned at separating a farmer's house when the assessing is done. "The farm must be assessed as a unit," he said.



SMITH GRIFFIN again won the Grand Cham-Fair. Nino Braida presents the E. Braida and Son trophy. (Staff Photo)

Free Press Farm Page

Acton Fair

Bill Lasby is top showman

By Jim Jenkins

Acton Fair this year was blessed with a good turnout in the 4-H division, due to the enthusiasm of the members, leaders and the good weather. The top showman of the Acton 4-H Calf Club was Bill Lasby of R. 2, Rockwood. A close second was his brother, Bob, while Keith Aitken, R. 3, Acton, was third.

In the 4-H Calf Classes John Brown of R. 4, Acton placed first in the Junior Holstein Heifer Class, while Susan

Murray, R. R. 1, Acton topped the Junior Holstein Calf Class. Leah Leslie, R. R. 3, Acton, showed the top beef heifer; and Bob Lasby's Short-horn steer was first in the market steer class.

Meanwhile, the Acton 4-H Forage Club saw a different group of winners. Sharon Leslie, R. R. 3, placed first with her Herta Bailey over Peter Lynch, R. R. 4, Acton. In the First Cutting Hay Class it was Keith Aitken, R. R. 3, Acton, first, and George McNeil, R. R. 3, Acton, second.

Stay alert

Did you know that if you multiply your speedometer reading by 1 1/2 that it gives you the number of feet that you travel in one second? At 60 miles an hour you cover about 90 feet a second. That does not give you much time to react to danger, so, obviously you can never relax your attention at the wheel.

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Top Jerseys

Campburn Amy Generation, 311842, V. G., a Jersey cow in the herd of Ernest Alexander, Norval, has just been issued a Lifetime Production certificate. In eight lactations she produced 87,246 lbs. milk, 4,397 lbs. fat. She is a daughter of the Superior Century Sire Brampton Sixth Generation, and a winner of two Gold Medals and a Ton of Gold.

Brampton Lua Eureka, 355540, V. G. a Jersey cow in the herd of B.H. Bull and Son, Norval, has been issued a Ton of Gold certificate. In 1435 days she produced 2,011 lbs. fat. She is a daughter of the Senior Superior Sire Brampton Eureka, and a winner of a Gold Medal.

Starbelle Acme's Anna, 323616, G. P. a Jersey cow in the herd of Mrs. S. L. Eva Harper, Georgetown, has been awarded a Ton of Gold certificate. In 1,461 days she produced 2,413 lbs. fat. She has a Silver Medal and two Gold Medals. To qualify for this award a cow must produce at least 2,000 lbs. fat in four consecutive years.



BILL LASBY, R.R. 2, Rockwood, added another laurel to a lengthening list of honors, by winning the Grand Champion Showman award for beef and dairy cattle at Acton Fair Saturday. Ruddy Holmes presented the John R. Holmes trophy. Bill won the Queen's Guinness at the Royal Winter Fair in 1967. (Staff Photo)



WHAT'S BLACK AND WHITE and seen all over? A record number of young Holsteins competed in the ring during the livestock show on Saturday afternoon. (Staff Photo)

Little interest

Nix county welfare office

Little interest was reflected at Halton County Council on the establishment of a county welfare office, as the Council adopted a report suggesting no action.

Reeve W. Coulter urged the committee to take up the matter in more detail. He mentioned the problem experienced at Halton Manor in getting proper investigations of applicants seeking admission there. If it was handled by a county office this difficulty would not occur, he suggested.

Presently each municipality has its own welfare officer, and in the northern municipalities the clerk handles the work.

The committee concluded the local welfare administrators were handling general welfare efficiently and there were apparently no significant subsidies being lost through this system. The committee also suggested if regional government was established, a welfare unit would no doubt be part of it.

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