

Agriculture minister opposes Site 41

by Scott Anderson
Staff Writer

Ontario's Minister of Agriculture is opposed to the use of farmland for a landfill site in Tiny Township, he told reporters last week.

On a stopover at a dairy farm near Wyebridge, Jack Riddell said he is opposed to the use of agricultural land for uses that cannot be "justified."

He said the policy of the provincial government is to investigate such land for alternate uses and if it can be justified, then the ministry allows it. If there are "conflictive uses," they would not allow the development. This led to his decision to oppose the development of the 150-acre site.

"I believe our comment on that site was that there wasn't significant cause for taking that site out of pro-

duction," he said.

The land is in Tiny Township. The North Simcoe Waste Management Association wants to use it as a landfill. This decision has met with strong opposition from local groups.

A Foodland Preservation act to protect farmlands facing the threat of such development will be introduced later this fall, he said. This act would keep good agricultural land in production, and land will only be taken out of production if there is good reason.

Although concern was expressed that it was difficult for farmers to find, and keep, good hired help, Riddell said there was no need to expand educational facilities in the province. He said the post secondary schools were

providing good, "practical education," and that there were three jobs for every

student concentrating in agriculture. Instead, he said the onus should be placed on the farmer to provide incentives such as room and board to keep workers.

If the lack of hired help continues, he did say the government would then

step in and look at the problem.

Riddell was touring Huronia last Thursday with Ken Black, Muskoka-

Georgian Bay MPP, and hear their concerns, he said. "Every time I come

out here, I learn something," he said.

These tours enable him to get closer to the farmers



Who's bigger?

Andrew Pilon, 18 months, of Penetanguishene, decides he's bigger -- but

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enjoyed a fun day at the fair Saturday afternoon.

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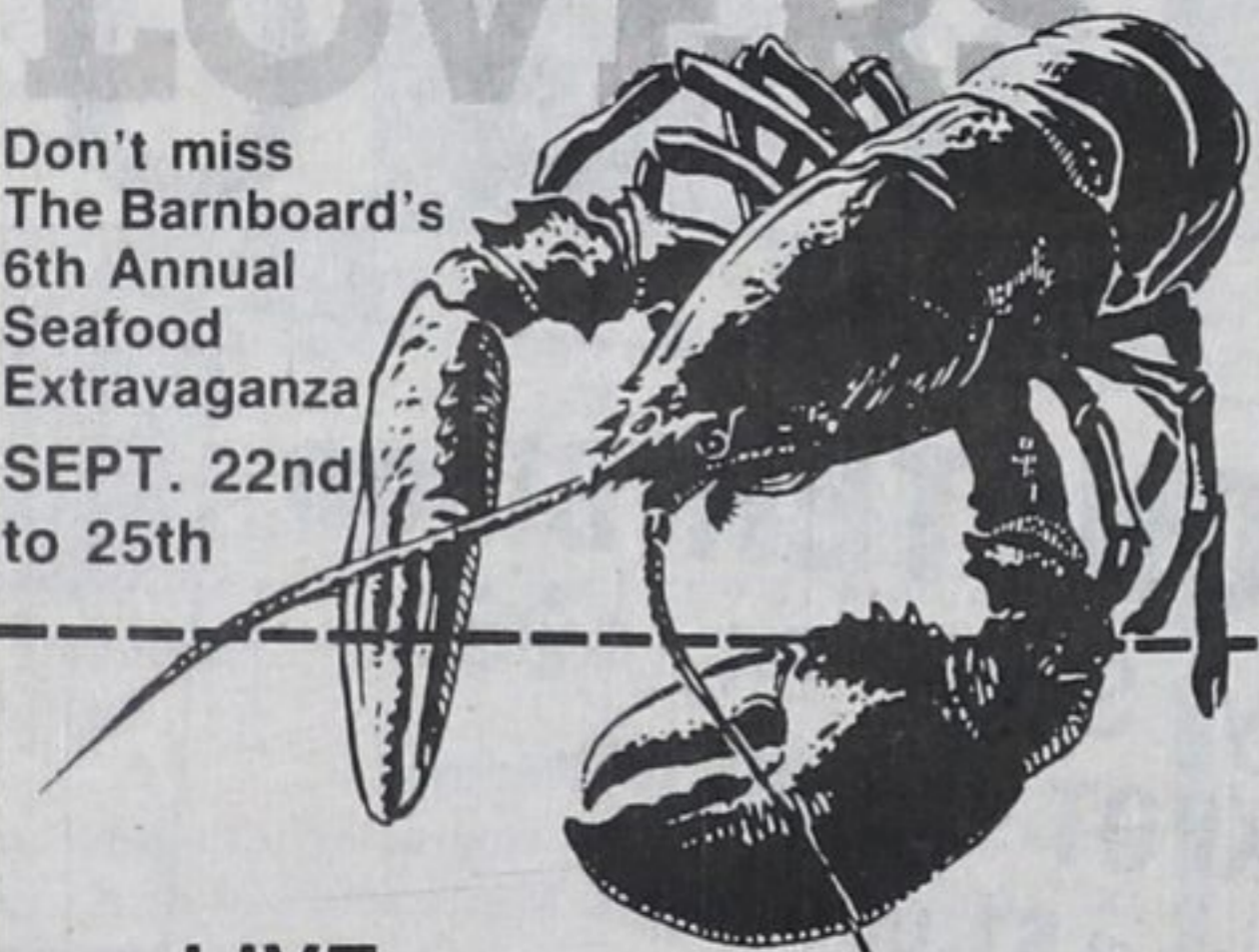
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