

Hardesty Endorses Management Act

drafted by Jerry W. Hardesty, commission member, Currituck County

As a member of the agricultural community and the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission I have become concerned about the position that some N.C. farmers have taken relative to the Coastal Area Management Act.

As it was envisioned and written by the General Assembly in 1974, and as it has been very faithfully carried out by the Coastal Resources Commission and Advisory Council, this act is of tremendous benefit to two groups in particular—farmers and fishermen.

The management of fragile resources related to public waters is of obvious benefit to fishermen. However, less well understood are the advantages of land-use planning and permit coordination for farming interests.

The land-use plans which have been prepared and adopted in nearly every county and many communities in the coastal area will serve as guidance for growth and fruitful development of the entire coastal area. The use of these plans by local governments to decide when and where to place public services is a normal part of good community planning, but even so, will be strictly voluntary at the local level. No enforcement activities for land use plans are included in the act; none are being contemplated by the Coastal Resources Commission or any state agency.

There are several advantages of such planning for agriculture which you should be aware of: (1) It will help keep property taxes lower by promoting efficient provision of community services (water, sewer, etc.) which will be necessary for the growth and development that is expected in the coastal area. (2) It will help keep prime agricultural and forest land in production by guiding development into more appropriate areas. And (3) it will assist in the maintenance of a healthy agricultural community which is essential if farm suppliers are to have adequate business to stay in operation in the area.

The Coastal Area Management Act was intended to foster fruitful development, not to stop it. Within the soon-to-be-designated Areas of Environmental Concern, the commission and local governments will share responsibility for coordinating compatible development in the fragile areas of our coastal counties.

However, new regulatory provisions which will apply to development activities within Areas of Environmental Concern will not apply to normal agricultural activities described by this definition in the act: "The use of any land for the purpose of planting, growing, or harvesting plants, crops, trees, or other agricultural purposes..."

Furthermore, drainage of potential farmland has not been made more difficult by the Coastal Area Management Act because regulations governing drainage were imposed years ago under state and federal dredge and fill programs.

However, a major goal of the Coastal Resources Commission is to simplify and coordinate the issuance of existing permits in the coastal area. The Commission has studied the problem and is now finalizing meaningful recommendations for the N.C. General Assembly.

In this letter I have outlined several steps designed to help the farmers and farm-related businesses in the coastal counties of North Carolina; I and the other members of the Coastal Resources Commission are confident these are steps in the right direction.

Jerry W. Hardesty
Moyock



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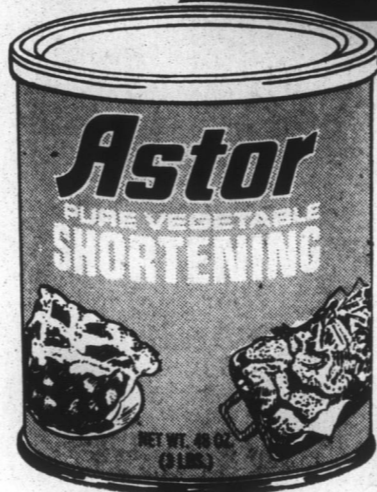
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 - THRIFTY MAID POTTED MEAT** 5 3-OZ. CANS \$1.00
 - THRIFTY MAID TOMATO SAUCE** 5 8-OZ. CANS \$1.00
 - THRIFTY MAID SPAGHETTI** 5 15 1/2-OZ. CANS \$1.00
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 - YOU SAVE 20¢ 409 CLEANER** HALF-GAL. JUG \$1.39

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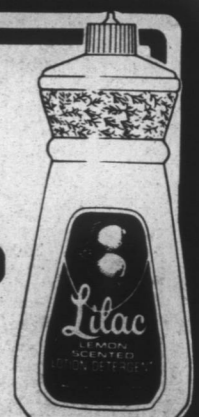
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