



Hexane process touted

Scott Sechler is right: Friends don't always have to agree ("Ads target Conoy soybean-plant project," March 2). People have differing opinions. But facts are stubborn things. And the facts about Perdue AgriBusiness' soybean crushing plant are clear.

The use of hexane has been proven to be the most efficient method to get the most value out of the soybean, for the producer and the end user. That's why the process is so commonplace. There are 96 hexane processing plants in the United States that process 95 percent of all U.S. soybeans.

The soybean meal generated through this process has been used in animal diets for 70 years. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration considers all products derived from soy, corn, canola, sunflower seed, safflower seed and other flavor extracts that undergo hexane solvent extraction to be safe for human consumption.

This isn't some unsafe, unproven process; it's the exact opposite. Our plant will meet or exceed federal, state and local government requirements. Nor is hexane unsafe or unfamiliar. The compound is already found in countless consumer products.

Farmers don't have money for full-page ads. Most local beans leave our state for processing and then come back as feed, meaning local farmers receive lower prices for their beans and pay more for feed. Our plant changes that calculation. And that's a fact.

Greg Rowe, Senior Director, Perdue AgriBusiness, Grain Crushing & PACMA, Salisbury, Md.

Bad economy forces people to use food stamps

The March 23 New Era editorial, "Where food stamps are king," is an incredibly mean-spirited, politically partisan editorial disconnected from the lives of many working poor individuals and families in Lancaster County.

In the March 21 edition of this newspaper, it was reported that many renters cannot afford apartments in Lancaster County. The average hourly wage in Lancaster County is \$12.09 per hour while the average cost for a 2-bedroom apartment requires an income of \$16.94. Pennsylvania's current minimum wage is \$7.25. A minimum-wage renter would have to work 93 hours a week to afford that apartment.

I know far too many people working 40 hours a week and more who could not afford a place to live without food-stamp assistance. For the New Era to suggest that people on food stamps are just "takers" and that they should just do without is unacceptable.

To suggest that President Obama is responsible for, and desirous of, seeing more people on food stamps is disingenuous.

The reality is if you have a food-stamp economy, you are going to have more people on food stamps.

Thomas R. Hassler, Lancaster