

Shaw's products carry 'Buy American' message

By LANE WALLACE
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Dick Shaw watched proudly yesterday as the first packages bearing the logo "Save Our Farmers, Buy American" rolled out of his frozen-food plant.

Shaw, owner of the Watsonville vegetable-packing firm that bears his name, has turned the "Buy American" campaign from an idea last winter to a swiftly growing movement today.

Concerned about the increasing impact of imports on the American agriculture industry, Shaw decided to form "Thanks Incorporated," a non-profit group dedicated to identifying American-made products to the consumer.

"I think people will buy American products if they can identify them," Shaw said yesterday.

Shaw started the groundwork early this year, calling people in agricultural and related industries himself. Later, a three-member staff was hired, with some volunteer assistance. Thanks Incorporated started operating in June; it now has 70 members who will use the logo on their products.

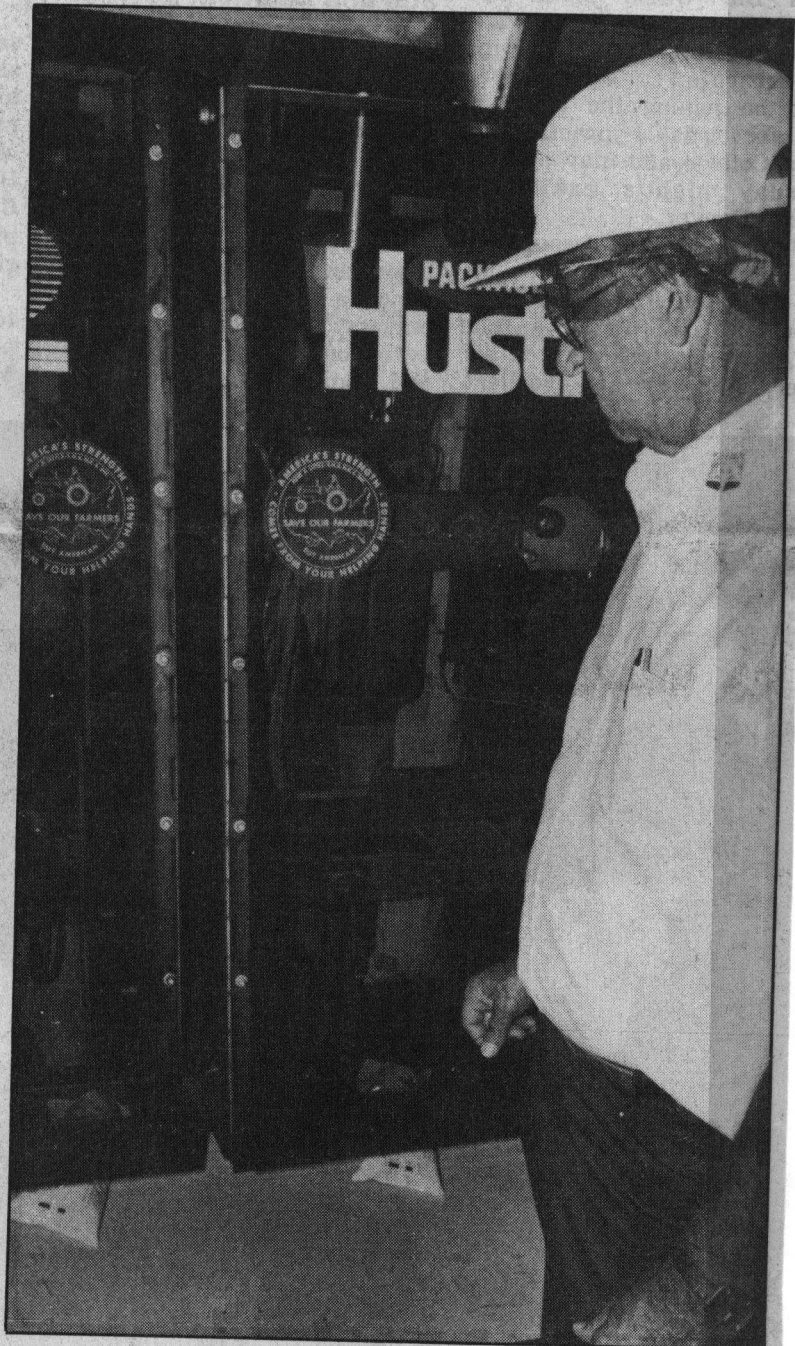
A number of other companies and groups that don't sell a product have joined as supporting members.

"We've got 4.25 million people supporting or endorsing us," said Judith Becker, executive director of Thanks.

"I don't think anybody expected us to be at the point we are now for another year. We haven't received a negative response from anybody.

"The smaller companies are supporting us immediately," she said; boards of directors of major firms are still considering the question of membership.

It's taken awhile for the Thanks logo to be printed on



Sam Vestal.

Dick Shaw looks at 'Buy American' labels on doors of computerized packaging machines.

labels, since the charter members had to use up labels they already had in storage. Some companies, such as Martinelli and Co., have been using point-of-sale placards with the logo.

Thanks Incorporated "is

not out to stop imported products," Becker said, but only to let people know what's American-made. "We do wish there were a few more controls" regarding the inspection of imported food, she said.