

## Forage Hybrids, Grasses Lower In Prussic Acid

Sudangrass sorghum hybrids, the farmer's best summer annual crops for rotational pasture and green feeding, can be high-yielding and relatively free of dangerous levels of prussic acid, farmers and crop specialists heard recently during the fifth annual Grassland Conference at The Pennsylvania State University.

Experiments with various sudangrass-sorghum hybrids in 1964 found that Suchow 34, for example, produced excellent yields of about four and three-quarter tons of dry matter per acre with fairly low levels of prussic acid. This was reported by Joseph D. Harrington, of the department of agronomy at Penn State who said farmers are aware of the potential danger of prussic acid poisoning.

While Piper sudangrass had much less prussic acid than any of the hybrids, yields of Piper were considerably lower than the sudangrass hybrids. Dr. Harrington pointed out his experiments have found that drought increases the prussic acid content of the hybrids. He said these forages should not be pastured or used for green chop until the plants are 30 inches or more in height. Stunted sudangrass should not be used under prolonged drought conditions.

Lawrence F. Marriott, researcher in soil technology, said perennial grasses have the ability to survive and grow under conditions that would kill alfalfa. As proof, he said

much hilly land would be nearly bare if all grasses were to disappear suddenly.

While alfalfa is queen of the forages, grasses will tolerate acid soil conditions which alfalfa will not tolerate, Dr. Marriott stated. He said he was not recommending acid soil farming but was pointing out that Pennsylvania has a lot of acid soil.

## Dunne Joins Federal Animal Research Team

Howard W. Dunne, professor of veterinary science at The Pennsylvania State University, has been assigned to a new task force on livestock research of the state Agricultural Experiment Stations and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The task force was organized at the request of the Senate appropriations committee. The objective, says Dr. Dunne, is to study and report on meat animal research, underway and proposed, by the state Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Department of Agriculture.

The task force report will emphasize the economic value

of livestock research, the nature of research and the facilities needed, and potential value of new knowledge gained from research.

As a phase of the task force project, directors of land-grant Agricultural Experiment Stations in the Northeast met recently in New York City to discuss their current and projected livestock research programs.

Chairman of the New York meeting was Alex Black, Associate Director of the Station at Penn State. Attending as resource persons, in addition to Dr. Dunne, were Macklin E. John, head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology; Donald V. Josephson, head of the Department of Dairy Science; A. J. G. Maw, head of the Department of Poultry Science; and Russell C. Miller, head of the Department of Animal Industry and Nutrition.

The overall task force includes 9 scientists from the state Agricultural Experiment Station staffs, 9 scientists from the staff of the Cooperative State Research Service in the U.S.D.A., and 15 scientists representing U.S.D.A. divisions doing livestock research.

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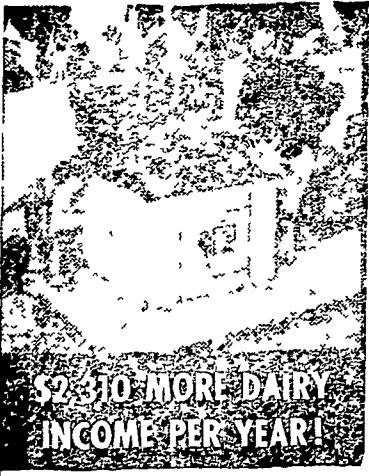
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