

Lancaster Farming

But Overall Damage Believed Light So Far

Southern Blight Spreads in County

The Southern Corn Blight is now scattered throughout Lancaster County, but only a few fields appear severely damaged at this point.

That was the assessment late this week by the Lancaster County extension service.

Jay Irwin, associate county agent, said he toured some fields this week with Don Robinson, vo-ag teacher, in the New Holland area and "about every field checked had it."

Max Smith, county agent reported the blight is "quite widespread" and "the feeling is that it's spreading into all parts of the county." He noted that the dry and cooler weather earlier this week seemed to be slowing

the spread of the disease, however.

But Smith said, "We're still reminding farmers to make silage from it in the early or full dent stage." The idea is to get the crop harvested before the blight has a chance to do much damage.

In commenting on the blight, Arnold Lueck, associate county agent, said, "It's scattered throughout the county, but the infection is certainly not uniform."

Just how much damage is being caused, Lueck said, really can't be determined until the corn can be examined in bins.

Lueck indicated that while some corn varieties have been found to have the disease more

than other varieties, there's no exact relationship between disease and variety. A variety that is hit hard in one field won't show any damage in another field, he said.

Lueck said he believes this discrepancy may largely be explained by wind currents which have been highly irregular in transporting the fungus and by farm management practices. Lueck said he has found the worst blight damage in fields where the corn crop has been under stress for various reasons such as damage by rootworm, too thick a stand, poor weed control or poor soil.

The highly erratic nature of the disease was indicated by Irwin. "In the center of one field one variety looked like a blow torch hit it and another variety on either side was hit but didn't show much damage." And the farmer reported that some parts of the variety that was hit was damaged much more in some parts of the field than in other parts.

Despite the severe damage in some fields, the county officials believe that the overall damage

at this point in Lancaster County is not critical. A loss figure of 5 to 10 per cent is suggested, although it is emphasized no one really knows what the figure is or will be.

The figure could change significantly between now and completion of harvest, it is emphasized, depending in large part on the weather. A rainy, humid September would encourage ra-

3 Pork Promotion Signs Put Up in Lancaster Co.

Three billboards promoting pork have been erected in Lancaster County as part of the statewide pork promotion campaign.

The billboards are located on Route 222 just outside Ephrata going toward Reading, on Route 23 going toward New Holland, and on Route 30 near Paradise.

In a meeting this week, the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Association allocated \$6,000 to the promotion of pork in the form of billboards, in-store promotion material and place mats for restaurants.

pid growth of the blight and its toll could rise sharply, while a dry month with cool nights, officials believe, could keep the disease from getting much worse than it is now.

Smith is much more concerned about the late corn than about corn which is now nearly mature. Besides the question of weather, Smith said the blight could slow down the maturing of this corn so that frost catches it.

Even a 5 to 10 per cent loss would amount to a lot of corn countywide. Irwin pointed out that in 1969, the county reported 104,600 acres of corn in grain form and another 33,900 acres of silage.

Earlier this year, Lueck projected an eight cent increase in plantings. This would bring the corn acreage in the county to around the 150,000 level this year—out of about 400,000 acres in the county.

But Irwin indicated that the county can absorb a 5 to 10 per cent crop loss. There were much greater losses during past drought years, he said.

Smith told some farmers this week that most producers fre-

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Myerstown Lass Is Pa. Poultry Queen

Miss Betsy Jayne Ellsworth, Myerstown RD3, Lebanon County, is the new Pennsylvania Poultry Queen.

The 23-year-old blond was chosen from among eight contestants at the Dutch Days festivities last week at Hershey.

The new queen is 5'6" tall and weighs 127 pounds.

A coed at Mansfield State College majoring in home economics, she is a graduate of Cedar Crest High School.

She is a member of the National Honor Society and won the County 4-H Scholarship. She has appeared on the College Dean's List. A member of the Omicron Gamma Pi Sorority, she has been active in 4-H Club work in Lebanon County for nine years.

Among other hobbies and achievements, she lists youth fellowship work in her church.



Betsy Jayne Ellsworth
New Pa. Poultry Queen

She sings in the college church choir and enjoys horseback riding, cooking and sewing.

Representing the Lebanon Valley Poultry Association, Miss Ellsworth succeeds Miss Becky Jo Fritz as state poultry queen.

Runners-up in the contest was Miss Anne Schneck, Slatington, representing the Southeastern Pennsylvania Poultry Association.

Representing Lancaster County in the contest was Miss Nanette Stauffer of Ephrata, sponsored by the Lancaster County Poultry Association.

Contest judges were Miss Marie Gipe, home economist for Potomac Electric Co., chairman. Miss Scott Tagg, Hatfield, 1955-56 Pennsylvania Poultry Queen, and John Hart, Hershey Estates.

Farm Prices Decline 3%

Prices to farmers dropped three per cent in August, the sharpest drop in over 20 years, according to the USDA.

The USDA farm price index in August was 276 per cent of the 1910-14 base period compared with 286 per cent in July. The index reached a five-year high of 290 in February.

The crop reporting board attributed the drop in August to lower prices for hogs, cattle, and potatoes with higher prices for milk, lettuce and wheat partially offsetting the decline.

Lancaster Co. DHIA Board Approves Fee Increase for New Test System

The Lancaster County DHIA board Monday night approved a link-up with the new Penn State University milk testing system and an increase in member fees of eight cents per cow, effective April 1, 1971, to pay the costs.

The present DHIA rate for a 40-cow herd is \$25 per month for twice a day; \$22 for single test, and \$14.50 for owner-sample.

At eight cents per cow, the new rate effective next year will add \$3.20 per month to the typical 40 cow herd test rate, officials explained.

The DHIA testers themselves will pay the mailing costs in sending the samples to Penn State for testing, it was decided. The mailing cost was estimated at around two cents per cow.

The DHIA milk samples in the past have been processed locally by the individual testers using a Babcock testing unit, an acid solution system. Each of 15 Lancaster County testers had a Babcock unit.

Under the new system, the

Beef Western-Style

About 210 Red Rose 4-H Baby Beef and Lamb Club members and parents attended the annual beef barbecue this week at the Penryn picnic woods.

The main dish was beef barbecued western-style in a pit.

testing will be done by Penn State using a new process and equipment known as a Milk-O-Tester. Only 10 Milk-O-Testers, which cost about \$18,000 each, will be needed for the entire state, it has been reported.

In discussing the new DHIA rate increase to send the samples to Penn State, local DHIA members reported that actual cost will be about 12 cents per sample, 10 cents to the University for the test and two cents cost to send the sample.

But in passing along the cost to producers, the DHIA board chose a per cow, rather than per sample, system.

Some discussion was given to having the testers pay a higher proportion of the increase on the grounds that the new system will enable testers to do their job in a shorter time. But the final decision was to hold the cost increase to the testers to two cents.

In other action, it was reported the state DHIA board has adopted a policy change to allow members to withhold, on request, their names from publication in DHIA lists in local newspapers and the DHIA yearly summary booklet. Forms for requesting the withholding will be available from local testers.

The forms were made available, it was indicated, for use by individuals who might have

strong convictions against publication but it was reported that movement in and out of the publication list will be discouraged by limiting a change in status to the beginning of the test year. A farmer who changes his mind about non-publication could also fill out a card to be reinstated.

During the meeting, Robert Hess, local representative on the state DHIA board, said the state board membership will be increased from 15 to 18 members. One of the new members will be from Chester County, Hess said.

Farm Calendar

Tuesday, September 8
8 p.m.—Ephrata Adult Farmers Officers' Meeting, Ephrata High School

Wednesday, September 9
1:30 p.m.—Farm Women Society 14, home of Mrs. John Groff.

Friday, September 11
7 p.m.—Pa. Egg Marketing Association, Shepton-Conestoga Inn, Route 222, Lancaster ASC election day

Saturday, September 12
Farm Women's Society 1 "All Foods Sale" at Nichols Store, Ephrata.

National Plowing Contest, Greenville, Ohio.