

From Local Ag Teachers:



Thoughts in Passing



**Environmental Education
The In Thing**

Up until a few years ago the word ecology was not written or spoken very often. In fact, very few people even knew what ecology meant.

Obviously, this has changed considerably because now ecology has become a household word and many people consider themselves true ecologists. Ecology, like many other important matters, has all too often been met with too much talk and too little action. How many people do you know that talk about the way things should be done, but yet aren't concerned enough to get involved themselves and help correct the ecological problems we face today. Some people get involved very quickly and energetically and all too often the flame dies as quickly as it was kindled.

Each spring many of the schools in the county participate in earth day activities. It's ironical how some students willingly get out of class to clean a roadside ditch, and then a short



Carl Graybill

time later pollute that same roadside with litter. Why can't earth day be every day of the year, practiced by both young and old?

Let us all get involved in America's future and keep our streams, skies, parks, woodlands, farmlands, and towns

clean and beautiful the way they were meant to be. It's everyone's responsibility!

I feel people of all ages have to be educated about ecology; the relationship between living organisms and their environment. The best place to initiate ecology education is in the schools. Find out what your local school is offering in environmental education, and if it is being taught to all grade levels from kindergarten through grade 12. They might even offer courses for adults in environmental or outdoor education. You're fortunate if they do.

At Ephrata High School the agriculture department and the science department work closely together to coordinate the subjects offered in environmental

education. The agriculture department offers courses on the elementary, junior high and senior high levels. In the senior high agricultural program three nine-week courses are offered dealing with wildlife and forestry conservation, soil and water conservation, and landscaping. Both the wildlife and forestry conservation and the soil and water conservation courses are offered twice per year and the interest and enrollment is very high.

Most students want to get involved in worthwhile activities, especially when it deals with the environment. The following are a few of the activities Ephrata gets the students involved in that creates interest and develops an appreciation for man's environment:

1. Pennsylvania Fish Commission fish stocking demonstration.
2. Evaluation of streams and ponds for plant and animal life.
3. Evaluate local streams for various pollutants, and determine quality of stream.
4. Field trip to Middlecreek Wildlife Management area.
5. Post mortem examinations of birds and mammals.
6. Evaluation and improvement of wildlife habitat.

7. Studying the relationship of one animal to another.

8. Propagating trees and managing woodlots.

9. Field trips to ponds and dams with sedimentation problems.

10. Visits to farms using sound soil and water conservation techniques.

If your school isn't offering courses similar to the courses I have mentioned, they are behind the times. For information concerning these environmental education courses, write: Carl Graybill, Agriculture Department, Ephrata High School, Ephrata, Pa. 17522, or call (717) 733-7961.

Carl Graybill
Agriculture Teacher
Ephrata High School



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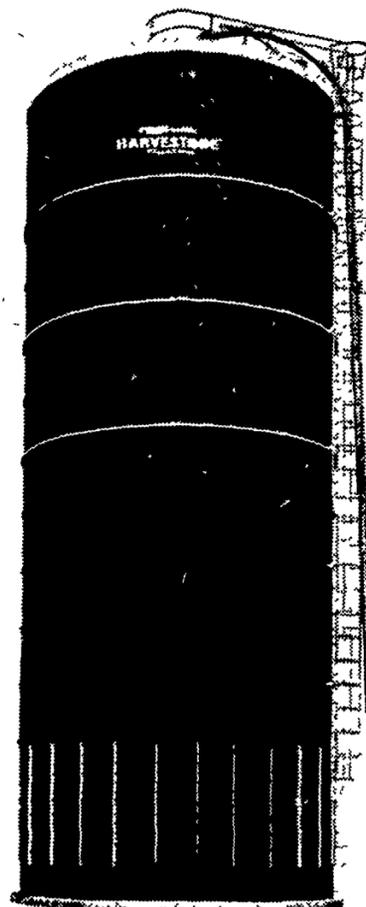
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