Hartwig Suggests . . .

Double Plant Corn, Crownvetch

Double planting of corn and crownvetch is suggested for farmers wanting to harvest corn while starting crownvetch as a perennial sod cover for continuous no-tillage corn. The crownvetch can be broadcast at corn planting time, says Dr. Nathan L. Hartwig, assistant professor of weed science at The Pennsyvlania State University.

Hartwig reports a number of farmers have been interested in growing crownvetch for seed. Broadcast-seeding at time of planting corn should use 5 pounds of inoculated seed per acre. Crownvetch can also be applied in a band over the row, from a planter insecticide box, using 5 pounds of seed per acre in the band.

In fields of established crownvetch, yields of corn can be high. Yields averaged 165 buushels of shelled corn per acre this past season at Penn State's Agronomy Research Farm in Centre County. The corn plots were fertilized with only 94 pounds of nitrogen per acre, 14 pounds of superphosphate, and 14 pounds of potash. The fields were irrigated twice during dry spells.

Phosphorus and potassium levels were high in the Penn State plots since the area had been in crownvetch for a number of years with adequate fertilization.

Weed killers must be chosen carefully to avoid injury to crownvetch seedlings in new plantings, Hartwig cautions. In cornfields, the only herbicide now available for safe use is butylate–sold as Sutan 6E, Sutan 6E with safener, or Eptam with a safener known as Eradicane.

Double planting of crownvetch in soybeans, can also be successful, the Penn State weed scientist points out. For weed control in soybeans, the herbicide trifluralin (Treflan) or vernolate (Vernam) should be used at recommended rates.

A few farmers in Pennsylvania have grown crownvetch as a seed crop for a number of years, Hartwig observes. Where these farmers want to grow corn and crownvetch, the crownvetch can almost be disregarded in using weed killers. Established crownvetch tolerates all herbicides that are cleared for use on no-tillage corn. Research at Penn State has shown that up to 4 pounds of atrazine or simazine can be applied in any one growing season without killing crownvetch.

Where crownvetch is established, however, farmers may find this legume competing excessively with corn. To hold back growth of crownvetch, use one-half pound of 2, 4D low volatile ester or amine per acre, or one-fourth pound of dicamba (Banvel) per acre. Apply this a few days before planting corn and preferably after there are 3 to 6 inches of new crownvetch growth in the spring.

Since crownvetch is a legume it will fix nitrogen from the atmosphere into the soil. This can be a vital factor, Hartwig says, in light of the high cost and probable shortage of nitrogen fertilizer next year and possibly for years to come.

Chester County Holds Annual DHIA Banquet

More than 240 members and guests convened for the annual Chester County Dairy Herd Improvement Association banquet last Thursday evening at the Guthridgeville Fire Hall. Also attending were five DHIA supervisors, Peter Emig, head of the Penn State milk testing lab, and Herb Gilmore, a Penn State dairy specialist.

John Stanton, Lincoln University, is president of the Chester County group. Elmer Young, West Grove, is vice-president, and Paul King, Cochranville, is secretary-treasurer.

In the group's annual report, seven herds were shown to have produced an average of more than 600 pounds of fat per cow for the past year.

Jefferson D. Yoder, Elverson RD1, topping all other county herds with an average of 17,353 pounds of milk and 696 pounds of fat in a 51.2-cow herd.

Comparable figures for the other six top herds were:

Jacob K. Stoltzfus Oxford RD1, 16,000 milk, 630 fat, 54.8 cows; George P. Lamborn, Nottingham RD1, 15,819 milk, 624 fat, 34.5 cows. David E. Weaver, Glenmoore RD1, 16,194 milk, 620 fat, 37.5 cows.

John S. Stoltzfus, Atglen RD1, 15,032 milk, 613 fat, 51.8 cows. Paul King, Cochranville RD1, 15,771 milk, 608 fat, 72.9 cows. Donald Hostetter, Jr., Sadsburybille, 16,045 milk, 606 fat, 74.1 cows.

The next directors meeting will be held with the supervisors at Engleside Restaurant in Thorndale, beginning at 11:00 a.m.