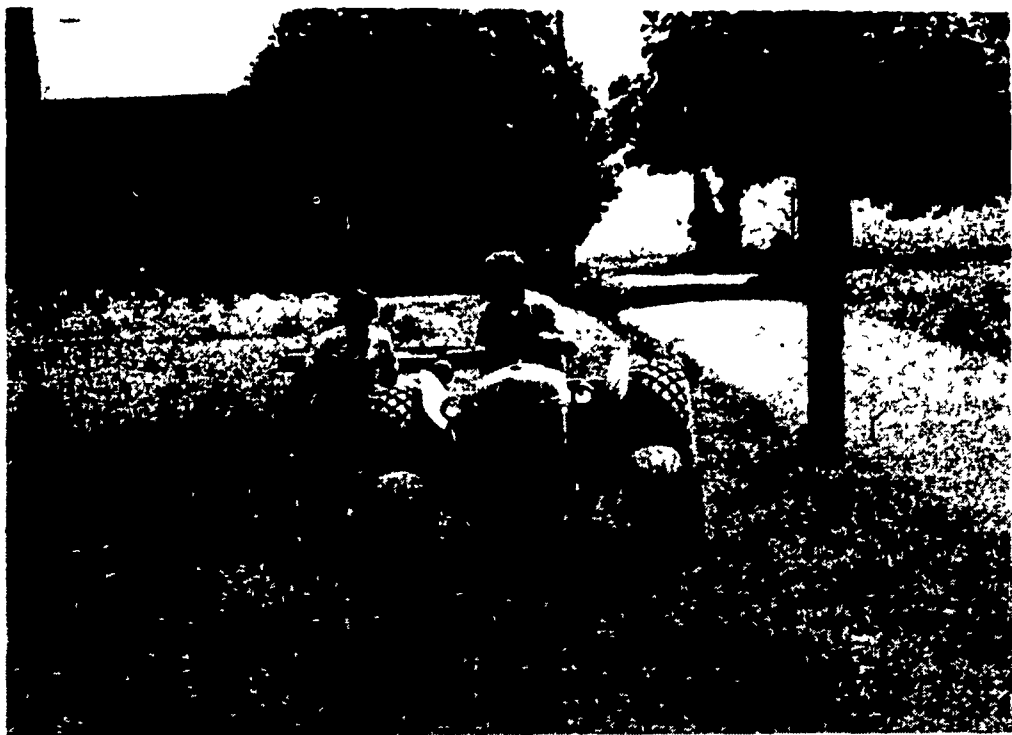


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Robert Hummer, walking, is one of the state's few turf farmers. He has some 75 acres of Kentucky bluegrass sod growing on his farm just north of Manheim.

## Turf Farmer Here One of Few in State

by Dick Wanner

Robert Hummer has the nicest lawn in Lancaster County - and it covers 75 acres. Hummer needs five full-time and just as many part-time workers to help him care for his grass, which is really a full-time business. Hummer owns and operates the Sporting Valley Turf Farm north of Manheim. He is one of only a handful - less than 20 - turf farmers in Pennsylvania.

"Sod is a nice crop," Hummer told Lancaster Farming when we visited him this week. "It can be planted any time of the year and it can be cut as long as the ground isn't frozen. But it is a lot of work. There's plenty of manual labor involved, especially in harvesting."

Hummer explained that while a machine cuts the sod away from the soil in 5"x16" strips, those strips must still be loaded by hand onto wooden pallets. Each pallet holds 500-square feet of sod, which is perhaps the only crop that is sold by the square foot.

Hummer gained his expertise with grass by studying turf management at Penn State, working at golf courses and working for six years with a turf company in Philadelphia. He sells his crop mostly in wholesale lots to golf courses, builders, garden stores, athletic fields and swimming pools. His biggest customers are professional landscapers.

A field of sod begins as a very finely worked seedbed, with 5-10-10 fertilizer worked into the top few inches. Then the field is seeded with one of five blends of grass seed. Although some fescue may be included in the blend as a nurse grass, the harvested sod will be 100-percent Kentucky bluegrass.

As the grass is growing, it's kept cut very short to encourage root development. Weeds are kept in check by spraying, but Hummer said he rarely needs to spray more than once for each crop because

the thick mat of turf chokes out any weeds that may germinate. A special fertilizer with a slow release nitrogen is used. It feeds the crop for about 90 days, before another pass with the fertilizer spreader is necessary.

"Young sod is healthy sod," Hummer pointed out. "We try to cut it after it's been growing for about a year. Sometimes it may go 18 months until we get a crop harvested, but I don't like to let it go much longer than that."

September is the biggest month for seeding at Sporting Valley, although some grass does go in in the spring. Hummer owns some irrigation equipment, but uses it only in very dry weather to help get the crop established. Sod is not grown year after year on the same fields. Charles Hummer, a brother, operates the home farm, which is just a few miles from the turf farm.

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## Newsmen Gather For Milk Price Explanation

by Dick Wanner

Newsmen from Southeastern Pennsylvania spent the day discussing the baffling complexities of milk pricing on Thursday at the Downingtown Motor Inn. The occasion was a seminar put on by the Inter-State Milk Producers Cooperative.

At the seminar, the media people heard from a number of milk pricing experts, among them Joseph Shine, market administrator for Federal Order 4, Paul Hand, Inter-State's economist, Daniel Martin, a Manheim dairy farmer and vice-president of Inter-State, and Lin Huber, a Franklin County dairy farmer and a retiring member of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board.

Also present were two officials from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and a farm banker from York County.

Shine and Hand explained the mechanics of federal order milk pricing to the group. The purpose of a milk marketing order, they said, is to guarantee farmers a market for their milk, and to guarantee consumers a stable supply of that commodity. To achieve those objectives, the market administrator and his staff must determine a price for class 1 (bottling) milk.

There are two steps involved in the class 1 price determination. The first step is determining the price paid for manufacturing milk by some 350 plants in Minnesota and Wisconsin. This price is the class 2 price for all 56 federal market orders throughout the country. To find the class 1 price, a transportation differential is added to the class 2 figure. This differential is the cost of hauling milk from the Minnesota-Wisconsin area, and in Order 4 is equal to \$2.78 per hundredweight.

Which means that if the class 2 price were \$7 per hundredweight, the Order 4 class 1 price would be \$9.78.

In response to a reporter's question, Hand said that the

Minnesota-Wisconsin series was designed to reflect a national milk market and not just local conditions prevailing in those two states. "There's been a lot of criticism about the Minnesota-Wisconsin series. But it's the best thing we've got at the moment. It does reflect a national market, because the milk products that are produced there are sold nationally. They represent some of the biggest food concerns in the country."

Farmers get paid according to how their milk is used. In Order 4, some 66 percent of the milk is bottled and is therefore considered class 1 milk. The other 34

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## Dyan Hale

### Lebanon Co. 4-Her Active in Craft Projects

by Melissa Piper

Dyan Hale is a young lady who has seen two different sides of 4-H, having been involved in the program while living in Illinois and by being an active 4-Her in Lebanon County for the past 18 months.

Dyan began her 4-H work in Illinois and became interested in home economics projects including cooking and clothing construction. She also started projects in crocheting and needlework which she has developed quite a craftsmanship for.

When Dyan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Hale, moved to their present residence on Poplar Street in Lebanon, the young lady

started her new career in 4-H work by joining the Falcon's Home Ec Club and a county community club.

Now with a year of 4-H work behind her and a new season of projects beginning, Dyan has noted some differences in the programs and commented on them during a visit with Lancaster Farming on Tuesday afternoon.

"Here in Pennsylvania, there seems to be more of an emphasis on State and regional activities more so than in Illinois."

"It was quite difficult to enter state competition there unless you had won high

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## Young Farmers Discuss Buying Certified Seed

by Melissa Piper

Buying and producing certified seed for small grains was the topic of discussion at a meeting of the Elizabethtown Young Farmer's that took place Thursday evening.

Guest speakers for the evening were Henry Reist of Reist Seeds, Mt. Joy and Don Stesslow, a representative of the State Seed Certification and Analysis Division of the

Department of Agriculture in Pennsylvania.

Stesslow, opened the meeting by showing a slide presentation on the work of the State Seed Certification Division and the current topics of discussion now underway.

Commenting on the importance of reading all the tags which accompany seed, Stesslow explained that there is currently a move to standardize the information presented on the tags from all states.

"We did try to have all the information including germination, standardized for all the states however, that did not come about."

"Some states label only for genetic purity," Stesslow commented.

The certification representative further explained that taking the time to read the tags was not a waste of the farmer's time but could be of great advantage in preventing the wrong type of planting.

The three tags which accompany seed bags are the certification tag, the seed analysis and the treatment notice. The certification tag tells the farmer that the seed has come from a registered dealer and assures its purity.

The treatment notice lists any chemical treatment that the seed has undergone, if any, and the seed analysis

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Dyan Hale, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Hale, 1509 Poplar St., Lebanon has been an active 4-H member specializing in arts and crafts.

## Correction

Last week's story on the Lancaster County manure management tour mentioned a 30' x 48' concrete silo on the farm of Jay Garber. That silo was a Honey Store silo built by Weaver's Star Silo, Myerstown. The article incorrectly placed the manufacturer in Terre Hill.