

Potato referendum okayed

HARRISBURG — Secretary of Agriculture Raymond J. Kerstetter on Tuesday announced he has agreed to call a referendum on a proposal to raise funds to develop improved potato varieties for Pennsylvania.

The referendum, requested by growers, would involve farmers who raise 25 acres or more of potatoes. They would vote whether to assess themselves one cent a hundredweight on potatoes sold, with the money going to fund a long-range variety research program.

"Our potato growers are badly in need of better

varieties for the various soil and weather conditions in Pennsylvania," Kerstetter said. "Our present varieties just aren't good enough to provide consistent production of the qualities needed for both table stock and processing.

"Unless we can come up with better varieties, Pennsylvania will continue to lose its market for fresh and processing potatoes to growers in other areas, especially the Far West."

It is estimated the referendum would involved about 260 farmers who plant 25 acres or more. At average

production rates, the one percent hundredweight would provide about \$45,000 annually.

The program would be administered by nine growers appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominations made by the affected growers. The growers would be proportionately represented both by geographic area and by percent of crop going to the

fresh and processing markets. It is generally estimated two-thirds of the annual Pennsylvania potato crops goes to processors, mostly for potato chips.

Secretary Kerstetter has set June 4 as the date for public hearings on the proposed research program.

Voting by growers would take place in the period between June 24 and July 7. If passed by a majority of the growers voting and representing a majority of the production, the program would go into effect July 3 and would cover the 1976 crop.

Sheep field day is next Saturday

UNIVERSITY PARK — Saturday, May 22, is Sheep Field Day at Penn State. The program begins at 10 a.m., and participants should be free to go home again by 3 p.m.

On the agenda for the morning session are:

Junior Judging Contest
Spinning and Weaving
Electric Fence Demonstration

Pregnancy Diagnosis
Ultra Sonic fat and loin determination

Match the Ram
Lunch will be made available at the Meat Lab., followed by two more hours of presentations on the following topics:
Wool Fabrics

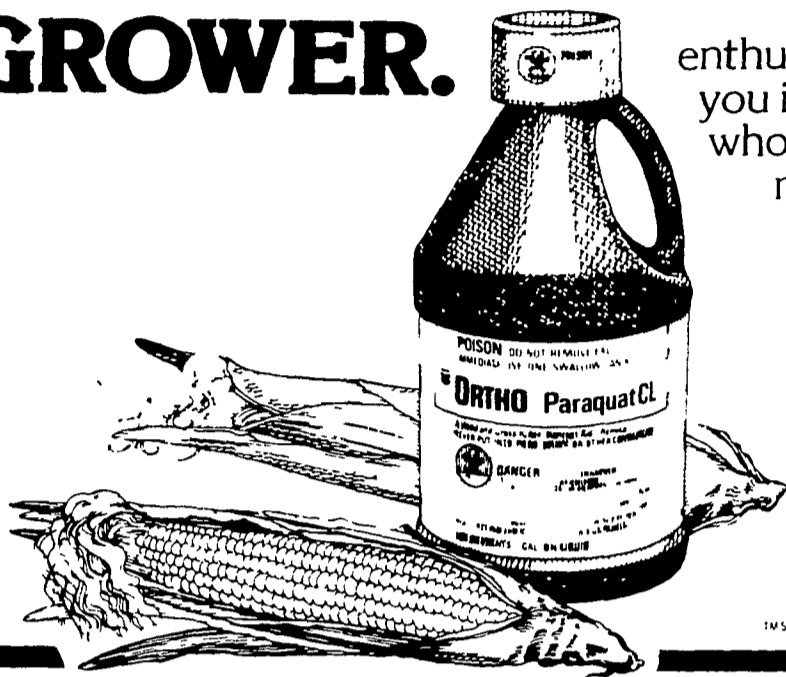
Out of Season breeding
Video tape of sheep on strip mine land
Movie — American Sheep Producers Council.

C. Pride at Hersheypark

Charley Pride will bring his entire road show to Hersheypark Arena on Sunday afternoon, May 23.

Also appearing at the Arena with Pride will be the Pridemen, Dave and Sugar and Gary Stewart. Show begins at 3 p.m.

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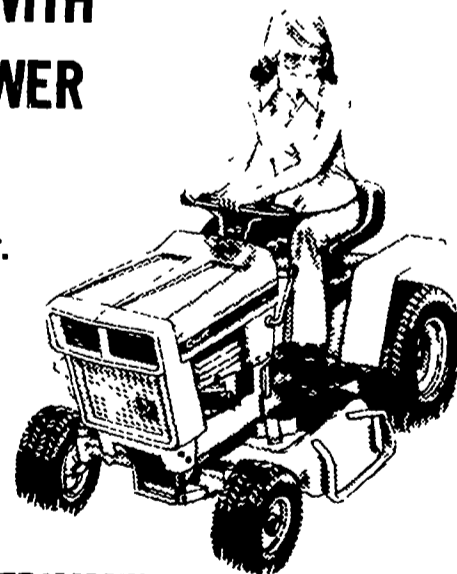
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