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Art contest slated

The Schuylkill County Dairy Princess Committee announces an art contest for youth, grades 1 to 12 in conjunction with Dairy Day being held on June 19, 1976, at the Farlane Village Mall. Chairman, Doris Brown of Pine Grove, explained the purpose of the art contest is to encourage youth to become aware of all aspects of dairying during National Dairy Month. The theme may be expressed in visual arts like collages, drawings, posters, or sculptures.

Any individuals or youth groups interested in entering the contest can obtain a copy of the special rules by contacting Mrs. Doris Brown, R2, Box 230, Pine Grove 17963, telephone 739-4187 or Mrs. Kathy Buggy, Schuylkill County Extension Service, P.O. Box 404, Schuylkill Haven 17972, telephone - 385-3431.

Beetle control program slated for June in Pa.

A significant battle will take place in Pennsylvania next month when federal and state agents launch their biological control campaign against the cereal leaf beetle, a destructive pest of small grains.

The three agencies involved - the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service of the Pennsylvania State University - will hold a Cereal Leaf Beetle Parasite Field Day June 16, as the campaign gets underway.

Early that morning, representatives of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Pennsylvania's Bureau of Plant Industry will collect cereal leaf beetle parasites at an insectary on the grounds of the Pennsylvania Game Commission,

Pymatuning Wildlife Refuge, in Crawford County.

The Game Commission has been managing the insectary since it was initiated in 1972. This involves planning, provision of seed, plowing, and general maintenance. Without the Commission's cooperation, activation of this insectary field day would not have been possible.

After they have been collected, the parasites will be flown to designated airports around the state where county agents will be waiting to pick them up. Later that same day, the agents will release the parasites in preselected fields infested with the cereal leaf beetle.

Tiny wasps imported from Europe, which attack only the cereal leaf beetle and do not sting, are the key to the federal-state biological control program for this pest. The wasps seek out the beetle's eggs or larvae (the growth stage following the egg stage) and lay their own eggs inside. When the parasite eggs hatch, the young eat their way out, destroying the cereal leaf larvae in the process.

This beetle is primarily a European-Asian pest that was first identified in the United States in 1962 in southwest Michigan. A flying pest, the beetle has since spread via prevailing winds to the east and the south, including all or parts of Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

Both adults and larvae of the beetle damage wheat, oats, barley and other small grain crops. They feed on leaves, chewing out long strips between the veins. Heavy feeding gives plants a white, frosted appearance.

The cereal leaf beetle parasitization program is a cooperative federal-state effort to reduce the use of pesticides in controlling and eradicating plant pests. The

motivating force behind this shift to biological pest control is a growing concern over contamination of the environment. Economics is also a consideration.

A significant economic feature of biological control is its moderating influence with respect to new infestations. The program does not have to be repeated yearly, as is the case with chemical sprays, according to Henry F. Nixon, Director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Plant Industry.

The parasitic wasps were imported from Europe several years ago under a cooperative agreement with APHIS, USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and several states with cereal leaf beetle infestations. APHIS and ARS screened the wasps and found ways to raise them either in the laboratory or in field insectaries, such as the one in Crawford County.

"Our research showed us that in Europe where these wasps are part of the natural environment, the cereal leaf beetle is not a serious problem for farmers in most years," Mr. Ed Eckess, District Director of APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Division, said. "For our use here, we needed to find a species of the parasite that could survive and colonize in our climate and be harmless to everything except the cereal leaf beetle."

"We finally chose four parasite species: three larval parasites and one other which attacks the cereal leaf beetle in its egg stage," Eckess said.

"Successful parasite colonization in Michigan and Indiana over the past four to five years has encouraged us to implement the program in Pennsylvania and neighboring states," he added.

For more information about the June 16 Cereal Leaf Beetle Field Day contact James Mernighan, Officer-in-Charge, PPQ programs, APHIS, USDA, Room 118, P.O. Box 596, Meadville, Pa. 16335; telephone (814) 724-3114.

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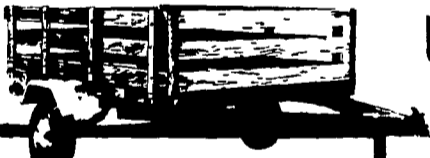
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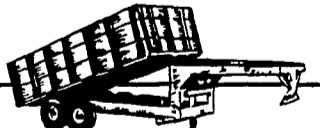


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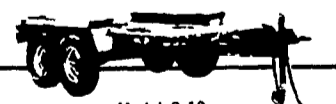


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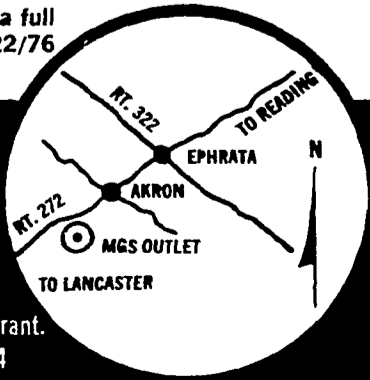
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