

# Proper manure

[Continued from Page 21]

supporters, evidence of the above statement is "visible everywhere". They proposed that "the mixed farm, adapted to the ecosystem, is the basic unit of a healthy rural area, guaranteeing the self-renewing and lasting fertility of the land. They add further that biodynamic and organic farms that are founded on a way of thinking that is in tune with living forces, have had significant success in combatting the many weaknesses and negative side effects which are supposedly found in present production methods. Furthermore, they claim that "the threats to the environment that might stem from agriculture cease, the quality of the

products is improved, biological cycles are more efficient, communities of flora and fauna become more stable, natural production potential is used more effectively and raw materials and energy are no longer wasted but used sensibly."

The "threats" Koepf and his cohorts see in present farming methods are primarily chemicals and production trends which will stress the soil beyond its limits. Koepf claims that pushing the soil beyond its natural production limits is what makes it necessary for man to support his agriculture with chemicals and other "crutches."

Koepf's presentation last week was entitled "Building Fertile Soils." One of the

methods he suggests is that dairy and livestock farmers store and compost their animal manures if they want to get the most out of it and that they begin to save the urine portions as well, rather than allowing them to drain away. "Proper manure handling on the farm implies storage," the professor lectured.

The primary concern of a biodynamic approach to agriculture, Koepf said, is over the inputs which are required to maintain fertility of the soil and nutritional quality in the goods which are harvested from it. Along with it are considerations for the environment, energy, and the national economy. "Try to build a self-sustaining farm with local resources," he advocated.

The biodynamic approach to agriculture considers the soil not just from an agricultural viewpoint, but from its mineral content as well. The idea, says Koepf, is the look at the complete picture and then work with the soil in such a way so that natural balances are maintained.

"The fatal error," Koepf went on, is believing that the problems of production have been solved." He says that man too often has the illusion that he has unlimited power over Nature. That is just not true, warns the foreign professor.

Many farmers today are forced to grow "good" crops because of the economic pressures they're faced with, Koepf explained, and their top production is frequently harvested at the soil's expense.

Asked about weed control, Koepf quipped: "Weed control means proper plant

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, September 3, 1977-29

husbandry, which is cultivation." The professor was also questioned on sludge utilization, to which he replied: "It should not be used beyond what's produced on the farm."

One Pennsylvania farmer who tries to live by the concepts embraced by Koepf and his cohorts is Paul Keene, owner and operator of Walnut Acres in Snyder County. The subject of the last three articles of this series on organic farming, Keene's philosophy is to know and control each of his fields as best he can with his own resources. It doesn't work completely, however, since he doesn't have enough manure coming from his livestock to fertilize all of his cropland. He beats that problem by utilizing all of the "wastes" from his cannery and occasionally buying manure from other farmers in the area. A third alternative - and a regular part of his program - involves plowing cover crops under every third or fifth year.

A former manager of one of the farms at the Kimberberton Farm School when he lived there as a student, Keene says of his farm: "We're getting the soil back into a natural balance." Among other things, he believes that a proper balance is Nature's way of enabling plants to resist insect attacks. "We don't have to spend much time controlling insects here," he told *Lancaster Farming* in an interview this Summer.

Paraphrasing Goethe, the German philosopher and writer, Keene says that if a person lives by Nature's laws and respect them, he'll

be happy and healthy. However, if you go against them, then whatever happens to you is your own fault. "It's on that basis that we've been operating," Keene explained.

Keene believes that insects, for example, have a proper place in Nature's scheme of things. He sees them as a means by which weak plants are destroyed and only the strong ones survive. If a plant is infested by bugs, Keene believes it's because of a weakness with that plant. A good plant husbandryman should then ask himself "What have I done wrong to have a weak plant?" According to supporters of this theory, the bugs are the plant diseases are preceded by weaknesses in the soil or plant itself.

Keene related how he once had several rows of squash painted, and one - just one row - was attacked by insects. His explanation is that that particular row was weak and Nature did not want it to produce seeds. Again, it's simply a matter of survival for the fittest.

The organic farmer's theory is that a decline in the health of the soil is also a decline in the amount of organic matter within it. Keene acknowledges that some soils are deficient or better than others, and admits his own farm isn't up to the standard he'd like to see someday.

"We've been taught to strive for quantity, but there are things which are more important than that such as quality or balance," Keene remarked.

More on this subject will appear in upcoming issues of *Lancaster Farming*.

## WAIVER OF FINANCE ON CASE TRACTORS FROM 43 H.P. TO 300 H.P. TILL JANUARY 1, 1978

Including All Implements Sold With Tractor. Optional Discounts Available.



## When you're thinking about buying... THINK ABOUT SELLING

It pays to invest in tractors that hold their value. Figures in the Spring 1977 Tractor Pricing Guide showed that a used 1976 Case 1070 returned a higher percentage of original new price\* than did corresponding 1976 models of two major competitors. That should tell you something!

Why? Because of Case built, custom-matched power train components, great

fuel economy, superior drawbar rating and a 12-speed range powershift with 3 on-the-go speeds in each of 4 ranges. Value that endures.

Quality, performance and high resale value. What more do you look for in a tractor? When you're thinking about buying, think about selling. You'll buy Case

\*Specific comparison data available upon request.

### DEPENDABLE MOTOR CO.

East Main Street,  
Honey Brook, PA  
(215) 273-3131

### CLAIR J. MYERS

Lake Road R1  
Thomasville, PA  
(717) 259-0453

### PEOPLES SALES & SERVICE

Oakland Mills, PA  
(717) 463-2735



### STOFFER BROS. INC.

1066 Lincoln Way West  
Chambersburg, PA  
(717) 263-8424

### PAUL SHOVER'S INC.

35 East Willow St.  
Carlisle, PA  
(717) 243-2686

### NEVIN N. MYER & SONS, INC.

RD1, Chester Springs, PA  
(215) 827-7414

### C. & P. FULTZ EQUIP.

RD 1, Spring Mills, PA  
(814) 422-8780

### A. L. HERR & BRO.

312 Park Ave.  
Quarryville, PA  
(717) 786-3521

### C. H. RINEHIMER & SONS

RD1, Berwick, PA  
(717) 752-7131

### ZIMMERMAN'S FARM SERVICE

Bethel, PA  
(717) 933-4114

### BINKLEY & HURST BROS.

133 Rothsville Station Rd.  
Lititz, PA  
(717) 626-4705

## 258 million eggs laid

HARRISBURG - Pennsylvania layers produced 258 million eggs during July 1977, up one per cent from the previous month and two per cent above a year earlier, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

The July average of 12.5 million layers was two per cent above a year earlier. Egg production per 100 layers during July totaled

2,058 eggs, compared with 2,043 a year ago.

The nation's laying flocks produced 5.3 billion eggs during July 1977, up two per cent from the previous month but three per cent below a year ago. The number of layers during July averaged 266.7 million, compared with 269.8 a year earlier. Egg production per 100 layers was one per cent below July 1976.

## AVAILABLE NOW FOR FALL SEEDING

- +CERT. VERNAL ALFALFA
- +CERT. IROQUOIS ALFALFA
- +CERT. APOLLO ALFALFA
- +ANCHOR ALFALFA
- +WL 311 ALFALFA
- +CLIMAX TIMOTHY
- +TIMOTHY
- +ANNUAL RYE GRASS
- +PENNLATE ORCHARD GRASS

## ORDER YOUR FALL SEED GRAIN NOW

- +CERT. BARSOY BARLEY
- +CERT. PENNRAD BARLEY
- +CERT. ABE WHEAT
- +CERT. ARTHUR 71 WHEAT
- +CERT. REDCOAT WHEAT
- +WINTER RYE

**P. L. ROHRER & BRO., INC.**

SMOKETOWN, PA

PH: 717-299-2571