

Red clover is raising some eyebrows

By DIETER KRIEG
HINKLETOWN - Alfalfa may be the queen of forage crops in Pennsylvania, but red clover is the most widely grown, says Penn State's forage crop specialist John Baylor.

Red clover isn't as popular as what it used to be, but advances in research indicate that in the next couple years the crop may have greater impact on forage production in Pennsylvania. Penn State and other universities have been taking a very close look at red clover and are finding that it has much more potential than many people previously realized.

While admitting that red clover is lower in feed value than alfalfa, Baylor noted that red clover's protein content may reach as high as 20 per cent, and TDN up to 38 per cent.

Baylor, who has been

talking about red clover to various farm groups across the state, finds his audiences very much interested in the crop. At a small meeting here earlier this year, for example, Baylor was kept busy for over an hour while farmers from the area bombarded him with questions.

Red clover is second to alfalfa in most forage programs despite the fact that an estimated one million acres are planted to red clover each year. In comparison, Pennsylvania once had 3 million acres of red clover. Alfalfa acreage is currently around 825,000.

Red clover has become a neglected legume, says Baylor. It has been relegated to poorer soils and interest in it was dropping for years.

But that may soon change, predicts Baylor.

Red clover has a lot going for it, and with new varieties such as Redman, Florie, Redland and Kenstar, interest in red clover is likely to escalate again.

Red clover has more shade tolerance than any of the other forage crops, and as such it is more readily established in an already growing crop such as wheat. Plant breeders - both in the public and private sectors - have come up with a number of breakthroughs with red clover, including the development of varieties

which offer greater disease resistance. The Chesapeake and Pennscott varieties have been greatly improved, noted Baylor, a man who does not camouflage his enthusiasm for these breakthroughs.

Interest in red clover is increasing, says Baylor, because it's easier to establish than alfalfa, has fewer management problems than alfalfa, fewer pests, is adaptable to a wider range of field conditions, requires a little less management than alfalfa, and it has more seedling vigor.

But despite all of these advantages, red clover plays second fiddle to alfalfa because it is generally short-lived and is much less productive than alfalfa on soils which are suited to alfalfa. Also, red clover is susceptible to diseases such as anthracnose (southern and northern), and mildew. The clover root borer can also be a problem. Complicating the disease picture is the generally accepted fact that red clover problems aren't as easily detected by the producer.

According to Baylor, red clover is a perennial plant under ideal conditions. But it dies off after even two years. With good management, a farmer can grow a nice productive stand for three or four consecutive years.



Now that the harvest season is just about over, educators are offering the latest in research and management to interested farmers. One of the subjects John Baylor, right, has been discussing is red clover. The often neglected crop is making gains on the forage scene. Reasons include its adaptability to "poorer soils" and lower pH ranges. With Baylor is Bob Anderson, adult farmer advisor with the Eastern Lancaster County School District.

The best of all varieties of red clover, opinionizes Baylor, is Redman. But it may not be readily available. Another variety with "real potential" is Arlington, which is also difficult to obtain. Seed shortages will continue to hamper hay crop production.

In yield comparisons,

Penn State research scores Pennscott at 100, followed by Kenstar at 130, Redland at 137, Florie at 162, and Redman at 167.

"We have some real opportunities here, although we must wait on the availability of the seeds," remarks Baylor.

Methods of seeding and the management of red clover

during its first year have high impact on crop performance. If red clover was sown in wheat last Fall, it should have been cut sometime during the period from mid August to mid September. To allow it to grow uncut would mean sacrificing yields of around one-half to three-quarters of (Turn to Page 32)

GARBER OIL CO.

TEXACO

Fuel Chief HEATING OIL

& OIL HEATING EQUIPMENT
AIR CONDITIONING
 MOUNT JOY, PA.
 Ph. 653-1821

GLASBORD®

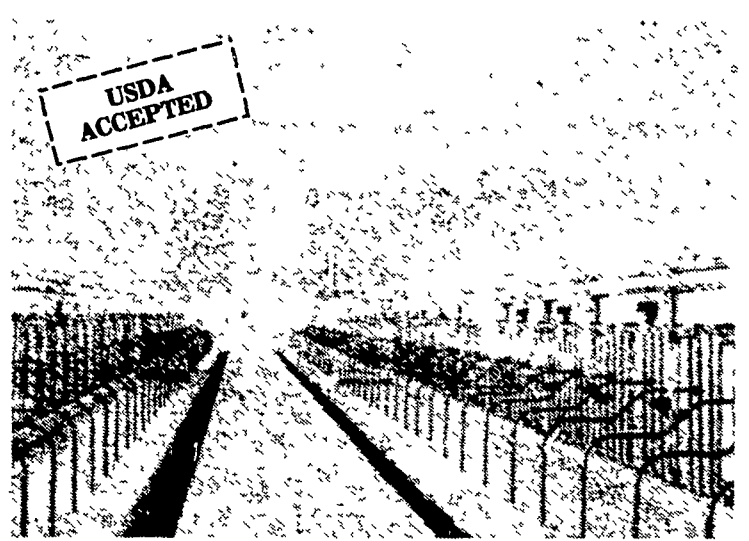
ELIMINATES THE EPOXY AND OTHER YEARLY COSTLY MAINTENANCE TO WALLS AND CEILINGS



FOR FARM BUILDINGS

← **CLEANABLE**

DURABLE →



FIBERGLASS REINFORCED PLASTIC PANELS & ROLLS

- **GLASBORD® IS TOUGH**
 - ACID SCRATCH AND ABRASION RESISTANT
- **GLASBORD® INSTALLS EASILY**
 - MILKING PARLORS, HOLDING ROOMS, OFFICES, SLAUGHTER HOUSES
- **GLASBORD® RESISTS DIRT**
 - WILL NOT STAIN, CORRODE
 - RESISTS ANIMAL WASTES
 - CLEANS WITH ORDINARY METHODS

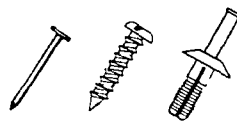
IN STOCK - AVAILABLE NOW

**3/32 & 1/8" THICKNESS,
 4 x 8 FT. PANELS
 3/32 & 1/8" - 4 x 40
 AND 4 x 45 FT. ROLLS**

ALL CORNER MOLDING AND FASTENERS



FASTEN TO WALLS & CEILINGS WITH NON-RUSTING, NON-CORRODING TYPE FASTENERS.



VINYL MOLDINGS ARE AVAILABLE TO GIVE A FINISHED APPEARANCE & A WATERTIGHT INSTALLATION.

RYDER SUPPLY CO.

R.D. 8, P.O. Box 219
 Chambersburg, Pa.
 Phone: 717/263-9111

Barn and Feed Lot Equipment