

Pennfine ryegrass is first with federal law

UNIVERSITY PARK - Pennfine ryegrass, developed at The Pennsylvania State University, has become the first Penn State variety produced under the new federal Plant Variety Protection Act. The new law stipulates that seed growers wishing to

produce a new variety may do so under a contract wherein the growers must meet regulations for quality seed as set by the breeder (PennState).

The law thus provides for proprietary ownership, wherein an individual or

organization owns and controls a variety. In this way, the contract assures the breeder that seed will have the superior qualities originally built into the new variety, according to Dr. Joseph M. Duich, developer of Pennfine ryegrass.

The Plant Variety Protection Act should help to keep the price stable by leveling off the supply and demand. Without such protection, unlimited numbers of seed producers enter the market with a resulting "feast and famine" for seed stocks, Dr. Duich pointed out.

He said the Plant Variety Protection Act has no provision to put old varieties under the law. In fact, a new variety can not be sold for

more than a year before applying for certification. Handling all contractual arrangements for producing Pennfine ryegrass is the Seed Production and Introduction Corporation (SPIC). Already, four competing national seed companies are producing Pennfine under contract with SPIC. Dr. Duich said Pennfine ryegrass is also produced by two companies in Holland. Any Pennsylvania seedsman wanting to obtain Pennfine can secure a contract with SPIC.

SPIC also contracts for production of Pennstar

Kentucky bluegrass, another Penn State development.

With the new variety protection act in operation, old stocks of ryegrass will become victims of oversupply, Dr. Duich said. He claimed there can be as much as a six million dollar turnover in seed stocks within 12 months. Sold only as ryegrass, the seed takes a 25 to 50 per cent drop in price.

Since it was first released in 1971, slightly over 11 million pounds of Pennfine ryegrass have been grown for seed. Production this year is expected to exceed four million pounds.

Grange is neutral on strike

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The National Grange, the nation's oldest and second largest farm organization, has taken part in many protest movements since its founding in 1867. However, the Grange has not taken a formal position on the recent strike called by the American Agriculture group.

John W. Scott, Master of the National Grange, said at Grange headquarters in Washington, D.C., "While the Grange does not have an official position on the strike, I have encouraged our membership to study the issues and arrive at their own decision regarding participation in the strike. We understand and are in sympathy with the objectives of the American Agriculture movement," Scott said, "but in our 111 year history we have found our objectives can best be obtained by working within the system to create an economic climate that will protect producers and allow them to maximize their capital investments, labor and management ability to increase profits."

The national farm leader

went on to say that the 1977 farm act is a sound basis on which to build a stronger, more stable American agriculture. "Changes need to be made," Scott said, "in the method of supplementing farm income so that government support helps those who need it the most such as tenants, and small and medium-size family farms and not large, industrialized agriculture that can weather economic and natural storms."

Scott pointed out that the smaller farmers do not receive all of the advantages of farm programs, tax credits and other benefits of largeness and consequently were the first to feel the cost/price squeeze. He recommends a change in the deficiency payment schedule and set-aside payments, and an all-risk, all-county, all-crop federal insurance program and better credit availability and refinancing opportunities for medium size and young farmers.


Scott, who is also a former dairy farmer, concluded, "The unrest in American agriculture is real and to think otherwise is penny-

wise and pound foolish. I publicly call on Jimmy Carter, as President and as a farmer, to call a meeting of national farm leaders to discuss the agriculture problem. It's time the Administration spoke up for the producers of our nation's only renewable resource."


TAX TABLES EASIER TO USE

Here's helpful advice about the new tax tables: If your taxable income is under twenty thousand dollars, you'll find it, in some ways, a little easier to compute your tax bill this year. The new law has replaced twelve tax tables with just four, which are used whether you take the standard deduction or itemize. Unfortunately, the tax return now requires more arithmetic on your part.

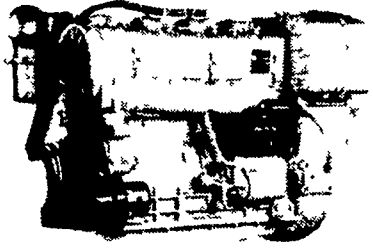
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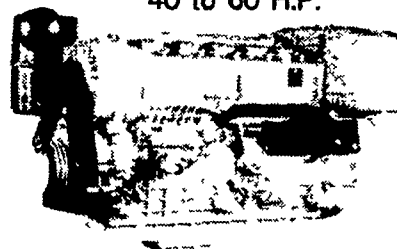
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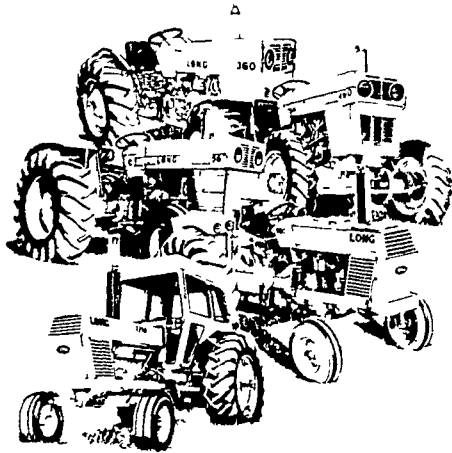
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