

Research aids mushroom production

UNIVERSITY PARK - Research to improve the growing of mushrooms has a 52-year history at Penn State. The research plays a major role in perfecting the growth and processing of cultivated mushrooms, according to Dr. Lee C. Schisler, professor of plant pathology at Penn State.

Dr. Schisler said Pennsylvania mushroom growers produce 57 per cent of the nation's crop. Some 10,000 people are employed in the mushroom industry of the Commonwealth. The cash value of their product in 1976-77 was \$137,000,000.

The first research facility, a mushroom testing house, was completed in 1928 with funding support from the Mushroom Growers Cooperative Association of Kennett Square, Pa. A new Mushroom Research Center was constructed by the General State Authority of Pennsylvania in 1960. Funds for equipment came from industrial sources. A Mushroom Test-Demonstration Facility, featuring mechanized production and flow-type design, was in operation by 1971.

Development of grain spawn, a quality product

used as mushroom "seed", brought significant changes to the mushroom growing industry in the early 1930's. The developer was James W. Sinden of the faculty. Several patents were obtained on the Sinden Grain Spawn Method in 1932 and 1933.

Since then, the spawn laboratory at Penn State has been responsible for over half of the mushroom stock for the nation's spawn plants. Schisler indicated this laboratory has been a significant factor in strain selection and increased yields.

The average commercial yield of mushrooms, in pounds per square foot of bed planted, has increased from 1.5 in the 1940's to 2.9 pounds in 1976-77. This increased efficiency can be attributed largely to Penn State's mushroom research and education programs, Schisler affirmed.

As in any unique industry, mushroom growers have faced a series of crises. In the 1960's, cheap labor import products from Formosa brought concentrated efforts by Penn State personnel to improve production methods and to develop additional markets for mushrooms.

Save hassles next Christmas---store decorations properly

YORK - If you carefully and systematically store holiday decorations, you'll save time, patience, and replacement when another holiday season rolls around. A Joan Lamberson, York County Extension home economist, says you need to protect your decorations from heat, dust, breakage, dampness, insects, and mice.

Remove all fresh plant material from wreaths or swags before storing them because they will crumble and dry, making a cluttered mess. Next Christmas you can replace the evergreens.

You can retain glycerinized plant materials and save them for one year to the next. Cover each decoration with either a plastic or paper bag and

hang each on a hook. Because heat dries glycerine-treated foliage, hang these decorations in a cool, dry place—not in the attic where it will get too hot during Summer months. Or store wreaths and other decorations in a large flat cardboard box. Put moth balls or moth crystals in the box to keep mice from bothering nuts, pods, or berries on the decorations.

Store mobiles by hanging when possible. If the mobile is long, slip it into a plastic cleaning bag or take it apart and hang sections of it in shorter bags. Use clothespins to clamp several decorations to one coat hanger.

You can build yourself a dust-free shield for hanging decorations from a large cardboard box turned on its side. Use the flap openings for a door. Make wire hooks from long lengths of wire pushed into the top of the box and twisted to stay in place. Bend the wire inside to form the hooks from which you'll hang decorations. You can make as many hooks as you need or have space for but plan on about five inches of space between each hook. Tape the carton door shut and you have a dust-free storage area.

Here are some additional holiday decorations storage tips:

- Put all ribbons in one box, Christmas balls in another.
- Wrap figurines or small accessories individually in tissue paper or newspaper and pack separately with the heavies on the bottom of the storage box.
- Wrap Christmas candles individually in waxed paper or clear food wrap and lay flat in a box. Do not use tissue paper for wrapping candles because the color of some candles will bleed through to leave you with a white candle.
- To prevent hard-to-remove wrinkles in holiday tablecloths, store these table accessories with tissue paper placed between the folds of the cloth.
- You can stiffen up wilted net and tulle decorations by ironing the pieces between sheets of waxed paper on which a damp cloth has been placed before storing it.
- Use a black crayon to label the ends of all storage boxes so you can easily find the decorations next holiday season.

From Bach to rock, the record industry is booming. In fact, the October Reader's Digest declares that the record business will take in more money than either movies or television this year - a staggering \$2.5 billion. Rock rates well over Bach, as it happens, accounting for 60 per cent of total sales.

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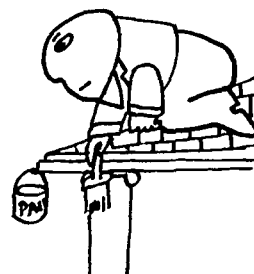
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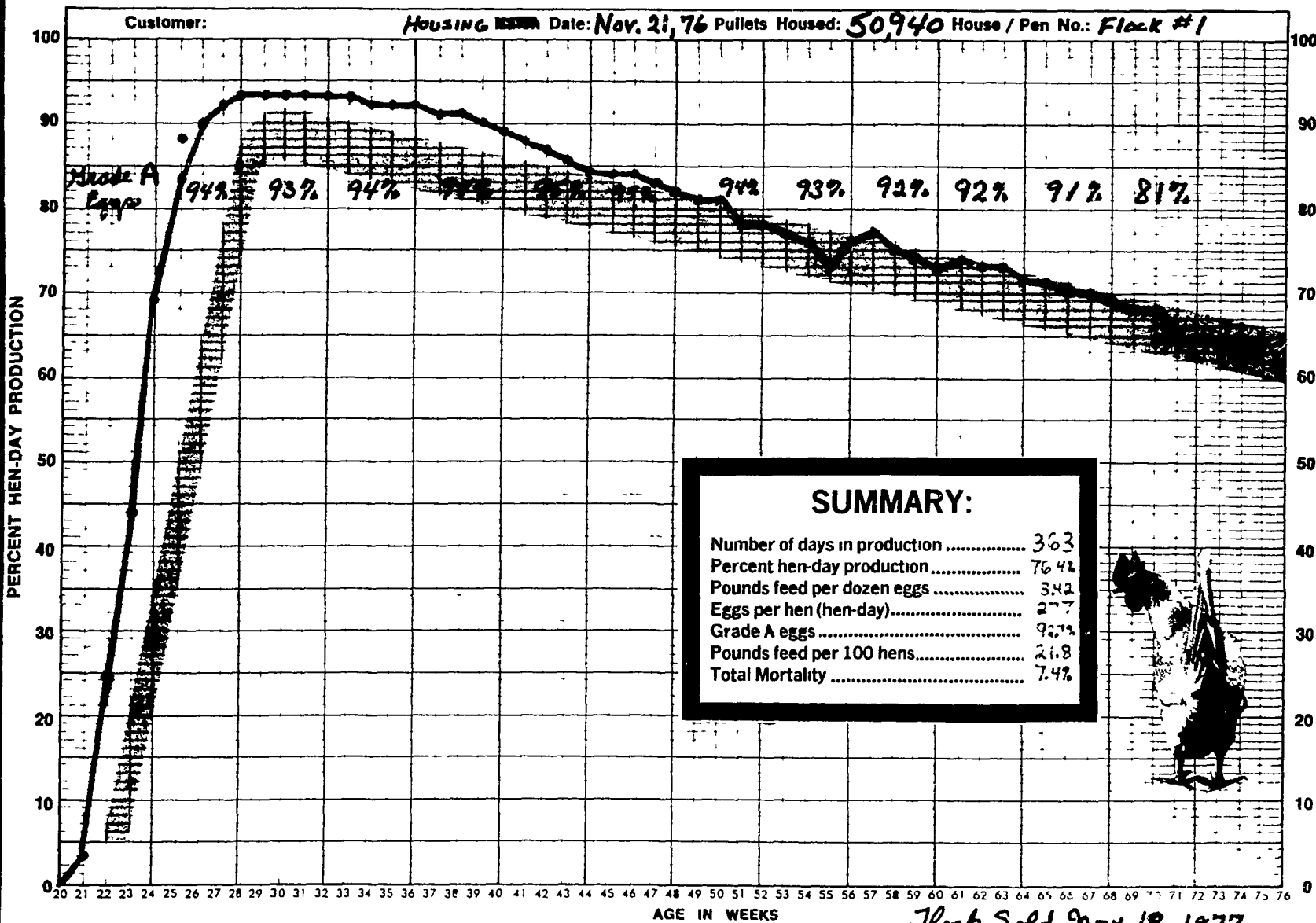


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