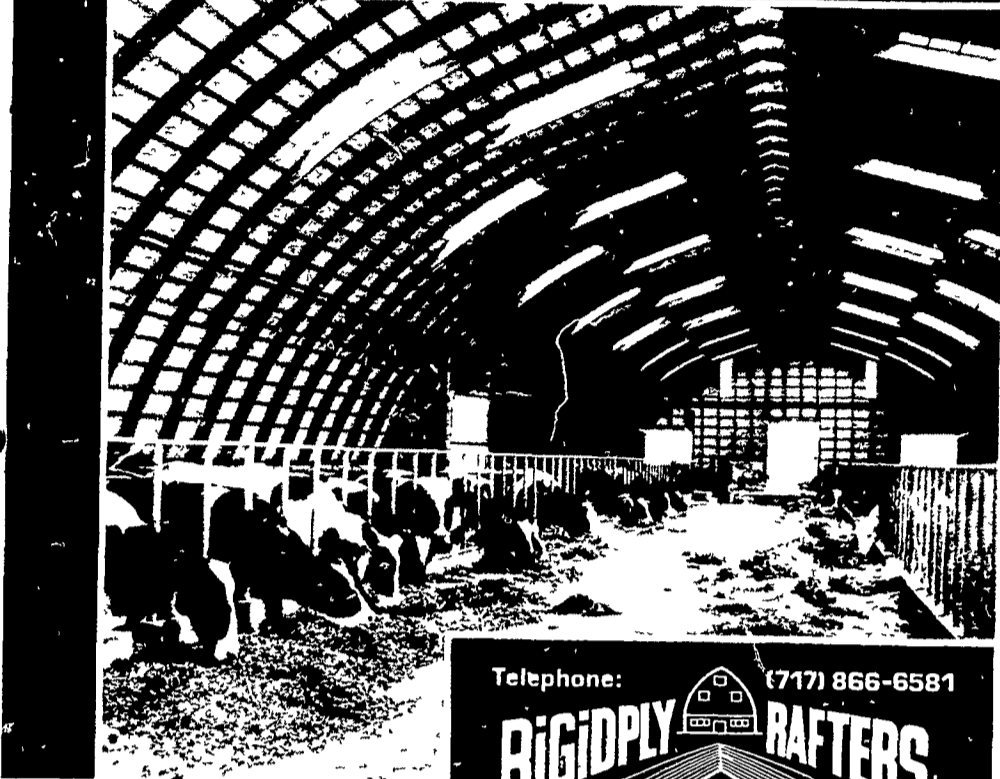


Field production covered at Crops Day

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By LAURELSCHAEFFER Staff Correspondent
LEESPORT - Devoting a day to hopefully broaden their knowledge on crop production, many Berks County farmers gathered at the Berks County Agricultural Center, here on January 15, as the County Extension Service held their annual Crops Day.

Discussed during the day-long program were subjects concerning field crop production ranging from alfalfa, corn weed and insect control, and herbicide performance, to wet soil problems and small grain varieties and pest control. A

farmer's panel on corn production was also conducted. David Schantz, Alburdis; John Hix, Bernville; and Dennis Sattazahn, Womelsdorf, briefly discussed their production practices from tillage to herbicide application.

All three men had participated in yield contests but used different farming techniques. Hix told his fellow countians that nearly all of his corn acreage is chisel plowed and disced twice before planting. Sattazahn and Schantz both use conventional tillage, plowing their ground with moldboard plows.

Sattazahn then uses a rotary hoe and cultimulcher. Schantz told the area farmers that he works his ground two or three times to prepare a good seedbed. All three farmers also agreed on liming and keeping the soil nutrients at reasonable levels. Schantz has been liming his ground every other year while Hix limes every three years. All men stressed fertilizer usage and herbicide application as well.

Schantz and Sattazahn have their herbicides sprayed on as soon after planting as possible. Hix explained that herbicides are sprayed on to his corn fields prior to planting, from a tank mounted on a disc. The herbicides are applied as the soil is disced a second time.

Program speakers included Wayne Hinnish, Bill McClellan, and Elwood Hatley, agronomy specialists, Penn State; and Steve Fisher, F.M.C. Corporation.

It was noted that Berks County produces 79,000 acres of hay, about 50,000 of which are alfalfa; 66,500 acres of corn harvested for grain and 2,200 acres harvested as silage. The county also produces approximately 1,500 acres of wheat; 7,000 acres of barley; and 14,000 acres of oats.



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