

Dairy program to be Feb. 13

FLEMINGTON, N.J. - Dr. Phillip Garrett, Ringoes, will speak to dairymen on February 13, 8 p.m. in connection with the annual Dairy Institute program scheduled by the Cooperative Extension Service. Meeting will be held in the Hunterdon Extension Center, Route 31, north of Flemington.

Dr. Garrett's topic will be "Bovine Reproduction," a slide presentation. He will be

discussing vaccination procedures, the need for good records, heat detection, anatomical problems, infections, hormonal problems, and the handling of bull semen in breeding the herd artificially.

Dr. Garrett is a practicing veterinarian in the area, well-known for his knowledge and experience in treating cows for reproductive disorders and problems.

Following Dr. Garrett's talk and discussion period, Frank Wright and Edward Oleskie, Extension specialists in dairy science at Cook College, will present their topics.

Wright will be discussing, "Formulating Grain Mixtures for Dairy Cattle." Oleskie's topic will be, "Dairy Herd Management Practices."

Dairymen and others interested in the operation of a dairy herd are invited to attend.

The dairy meeting is one of five livestock and field crops meetings scheduled for February-March. They are co-sponsored by the Hunterdon-Somerset-Mercer County Extension Services.



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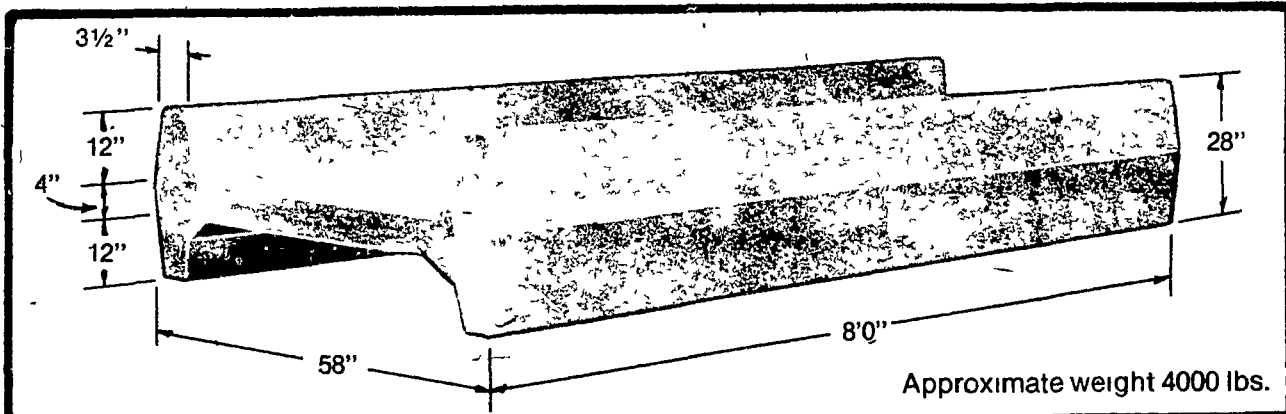
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Growing vegetable plants from seed can be risky

FLEMINGTON, N.J. - There's a great deal of satisfaction in growing your own plants from seed. Although some gardeners can produce quality plants at home, most home gardeners are not successful, says New Jersey county agent Robert Schutzki.

Gardeners who try to grow their own vegetable transplants usually have three strikes against them from the start - namely, light, humidity, and temperature.

Light intensity at home is often too low to grow healthy, stocky vegetable plants. Few homes have windows that receive full sunlight all day. The sunlight comes from one direction causing the plants to become spindly and lean in the direction of the sun.

The relative humidity in most homes is below 20 per cent while humidity in greenhouses is generally maintained at 80 per cent or higher.

The temperature in most homes is too high to produce rugged vegetable plants even though thermostats are being turned down during the energy crisis. This is especially true for cold-season crops such as lettuce, broccoli, and cabbage, says Schutzki.

However, there are some things that can be done to improve growing conditions at home. Ardent gardeners often rig lights over the plants to supplement the sunlight. Such lights should be kept a few inches above the seedlings to avoid burning.

One of the simplest ways

to get the maximum use of sunlight is to staple aluminum foil to a piece of heavy cardboard and stand it upright behind the seedlings. This will "back radiate" the sun and help correct the problem of the seedlings leaning toward the sun, Schutzki said.

A piece of clear plastic attached to a frame and placed over the seedlings will help increase humidity. The side toward the sun should be left open for ventilation. The leaves will scorch if the "tent" becomes too hot. Care should also be taken to keep the plastic from touching the plants.

If you decide to start your own frost-sensitive vegetable transplants from seed, do not start them too early, Schutzki emphasized. Tomatoes should not be

seeded sooner than six to eight weeks before the last frost in your area. Peppers and eggplants require eight to 10 weeks to produce good transplants. Frost danger can vary greatly in a relatively small area. Schutzki advised to check with local gardeners or call your Extension office.

After all is said and done, you'll probably have a better garden if you buy your vegetable plants from a professional plant grower. Good transplants should be bright green with stocky stems. Fruiting crops such as tomatoes should not have any small fruits on them at the time of purchase. Whatever you pay for your plants the cost is very small compared to the total value of the food you harvest.

Real estate credit legislation introduced

HARRISBURG - Senator Clarence F. Manbeck (R-48th) recently announced that he has introduced legislation designed to aid farmers in obtaining credit for the acquisition of farm real estate.

Under provisions of the "Family Farm Security Act", the state would guarantee up to 90 per cent of farm mortgages to qualified applicants, and would provide flexible payment adjustment schedules on such mortgages.

Noting that the spiralling cost of farm land is forcing many Pennsylvania farmers out of business, Manbeck said that "the bill is designed to aid young family farmers who want to stay on the land".

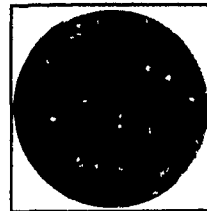
Manbeck's bill would establish a Family Farm Advisory Council to review all applications for special loans, subject to approval by the Secretary of Agriculture. Lenders would have 180 days after the initial default to file claims with the state, pursuant to the 90% loan guarantee provision.

The payment adjustment provision would allow the state to fund 4 per cent of the farmer's mortgage payments for the first ten years of a twenty year loan. During the second ten year period, the farmer would assume full payments, and in addition repay the 4 per cent state share of earlier payments.

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