

Franklin Co. agent wins national award

UNIVERSITY PARK — John Z. Shearer, Franklin County Extension agent on The Pennsylvania State University's Cooperative Extension Service staff, has been named national winner of the Agricultural Recognition Awards Program, sponsored by Ciba-Geigy and the National Association of County Agricultural Agents.

Shearer will receive an expense-paid trip to Europe, visiting farms, orchards, vineyards, and other agricultural establishments

in Holland and Switzerland. He also will inspect Ciba-Geigy headquarters in Basel, Switzerland.

The award winner will leave for Europe from Greensboro, N.C., June 20 and return to the United States on June 30. He is one of eight representatives of professional agricultural organizations to receive the European trip.

The objective of the Ciba-Geigy Contest is to recognize an Extension worker in the United States who has



John Z. Shearer

developed and carried out outstanding educational programs in crop production.

Shearer was cited for his educational program to improve yields and profits from growing quality alfalfa in Franklin County.

During the past three years, he presented timely and useful production-related tips to growers in his weekly news column. Major portions of a monthly newsletter, "The Franklin Farmer," were devoted to alfalfa-related topics.

Shearer also initiated an Alfalfa Growing Contest in an effort to stimulate the adoption of better production practices. Collected in the contest were yield data, cost-

production figures, forage tests, fertilization information, and insect and disease control data.

Yields obtained by the winning contestant exceeded seven tons per acre in each of the three years.

He encouraged Franklin County farmers to participate in the statewide Grassland Awards Program, a technique to encourage better crop production and utilization practices. Franklin County participants were declared state winners in 1977 and 1978.

The award winner developed numerous field demonstrations, including no-till seeding, variety trials, and furadan for insect

control. These demonstrations were used as the focal point for numerous educational meetings.

The Franklin County Extension agent also developed a TVA Demonstration Farm Program, encouraged participation in hay shows at local fairs, and promoted a comprehensive soil testing program.

According to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service, average Franklin County alfalfa yields have increased from 2.87 tons per acre in 1975 to three tons per acre in 1978.

Additionally, numerous growers have adopted the no-till seeding technique and longevity of stands has increased by nearly one year.

Three FFA contests held

LEBANON - Three annual FFA Contests were held at Cedar Crest High School on May 4. The contests included small engines, salesmanship, and interview. Berks, Lebanon, and Schuylkill County FFA Chapters attended the contests.

The small engine contest included a written test, a parts identification test, and a fifty minute repair session, where the two member teams must find a number of defects prepared by judges and get the engine running smoothly. The Kutztown team placed first in Berks County, and fifth in the Berks, Lebanon and Schuylkill Area. The team

consisted of Dean Bruno and Keith Flicker. Dean Bruno was the highest ranking individual for the county, and Keith Flicker placed third. Northern Lebanon and Cedar Crest teams will attend the state small engine contest at Penn State, June 12-14.

The salesmanship contest includes the sale of certain items such as herbicides, axes, medicines, etc., to judges of the contest. The contestants are judged on their ability to speak fluently and know about the items and their prices. Todd Benjamin supported the Kutztown Chapter in this contest placing seventh in



the BLS area. Sally Melot, from Lebanon County Vo-Tech School will attend the state contest at Penn State this June.

The third contest is judged on the contestants ability to perform a smooth job interview and fill out an informative job application. Larry Shrawder placed first in this contest and will go to the state contest at Penn State this June.



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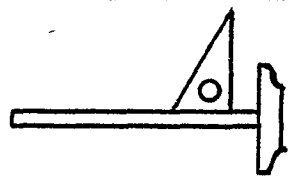
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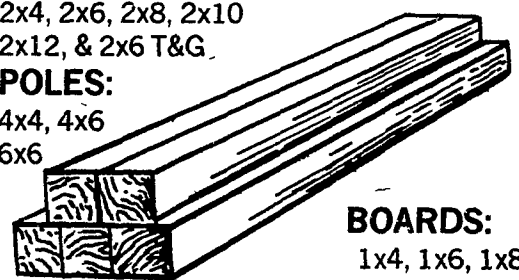
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