

## PSU's McClellan urges no-till farming

UNIVERSITY PARK — No-tillage farming can be successful on any northeastern dairy farm where the chief crops are corn, oats, and alfalfa, declared Dr. Willis L. McClellan of the Pennsylvania State University January 3.

He addressed nearly 1,000 farmers attending the Sixth Annual Mid-Atlantic No-Till Conference held at Hunt Valley, Md.

The Penn State agronomist urged farmers to "take advantage of what is already known about a complete no-tillage system." No-till farming replaces plowing with planters having soil-cutting disks or coulters which prepare a narrow strip for placing the seed.

Dr. McClellan reported the chief advantages of no-till farming are control of erosion, the ability to plant instead of using time for tillage, and minimum labor and fuel. Eastern farmers have proved, he said, that they can grow no-tillage corn, soybeans, forage crops, and small grains.

Timeliness of no-tillage planting can be of utmost benefit to farmers, he pointed out. No-till planting prevents delays in seeding fields.

In conventional planting, however, delays due to weather and soil conditions can disrupt the entire planting operation.

Moreover, soil conditions in no-till fields often allow harvesting when conventionally tilled fields will not support heavy harvesting equipment, Dr. McClellan noted.

In no-till farming, only herbicides are needed for weed control, Dr. McClellan stated. A corn crop can be followed with no-tillage oats the succeeding year. Herbicides with short-term residues must be used on the corn field to prevent injury to oats.

After removing oats for

grain and harvesting the straw, the farmer can put in a no-till alfalfa seeding in the oats stubble. Yields from a corn-oats-alfalfa rotation in a no-till system are equal to yields with conventional tillage, it was pointed out.

John H. Koons of R.D. 2, Waynesboro, Pa., described his experiences with no-tillage on a dairy farm.

He said the time and labor saved in growing no-tillage corn has made it possible for him to increase his acreage considerably and has provided much added income without creating any more work.

"All corn on our farm is planted no-till and we have been planting no-till for eight years," he claimed. "The

biggest advantage no-tillage has given us is the ability to add 300 acres of rented ground for producing corn and 400 acres of custom planting.

"This provides added income without greatly increasing our time and labor beyond that needed eight years ago to plant 100 acres in the conventional way," Mr. Koons affirmed.

He said 90 per cent of his manure is handled as liquid. He said he believes that liquid manure and no-tillage corn "go hand in hand." The 100-acre home farm is grown to silage corn and these fields get the manure.

All of Koon's silage corn field are seeded to rye

cover crops after the corn is harvested and removed. The rye is killed in the spring with herbicides and then corn is planted.

"It is important that corn planter soil-cutting disks or coulters cut through the manure crust to allow air and sunlight to penetrate down to the soil where the corn is germinating. If this is done properly, germination and a good stand of seedlings are assured," he stated.

He also adds a ton or more of lime per acre to all corn ground each year, as long as time and weather conditions permit. This prevents the soil from becoming acid and allows herbicides to control weeds effectively.

## Limit extended for comment on milk reconstitution

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Dairy farmers, milk handlers and consumers will have an additional 45 days to file comments and proposals on the issue of reconstituted milk, U.S. Department of Agriculture officials announced today. The original comment period which would have expired Jan. 15 has been extended to Feb. 29.

P. R. Smith, assistant secretary of agriculture for marketing and transportation services, said requests for the extension were granted because the proposals submitted by the Community Nutrition Institute are national in scope and require extensive study by those affected.

The CNI proposals would remove reconstituted milk from the Class I pricing provisions of federal milk orders. Reconstituted milk is

made by combining whole milk powder or nonfat dry milk with water and butterfat. Currently, all milk products used for fluid consumption are priced at the Class 1 level, the highest-priced class under the federal milk orders.

Smith said requests for extension of the comment period on the proposed hearing were received from several interested parties including members of Congress, the National Milk Producers Federation, the Milk Industry Foundation, and the State of New York. NMPF asked for an additional 180 days and the others for unspecified amounts of time to complete studies on the CNI proposals.

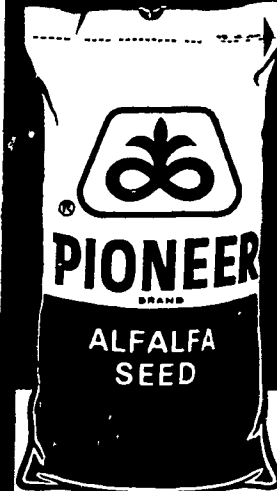
The assistant secretary pointed out that the extension is consistent with the administration's policy,

emphasizing that the public should be given adequate time to study and become familiar with issues that have national ramifications and are being considered by the government.

Notice of the granting of the extension was published in the January 18 Federal Register. Comments and proposals, with three copies, should be sent to the deputy administrator, Marketing Program Operations, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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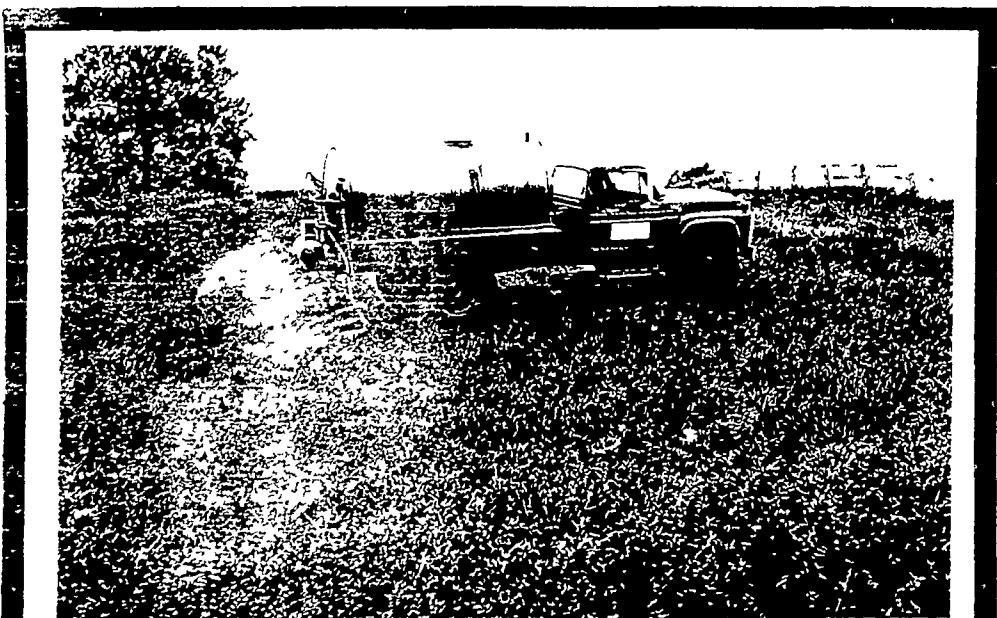
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