

Del. extension service cites outstanding employees

NEWARK, Del. — Delaware Extension Service professionals took time out to recognize some of their colleagues during an awards ceremony at their recent annual conference in Newark.

The awards were presented by the Delaware chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, the national honorary extension fraternity.

Outstanding Program

Accomplishment awards went to Carl German, extension crops marketing specialist, and Ron Jester, extension farm safety specialist. Both recipients joined the extension service in 1975.

Since that time, German has focused his efforts on two major program areas—direct marketing, and hedging for grain producers. His proposal for a com-

petitive direct marketing grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture obtained \$43,500 for a successful cooperative project with the Delaware State Department of Agriculture.

This has increased the opportunities for small farmers and part-time farmers to improve their incomes through direct local marketing of their products.

The economist has also conducted an ongoing educational program to help Delaware farmers understand and use the futures market and forward pricing of their crops. This is a marketing technique that few Delaware growers have understood well enough to employ to good advantage.

Since November, 1978 when Jester launched his campaign to inform state residents of the hazards involved in the use of wood stoves, well over 5000 people have attended his safety seminars and the number continues to rise. His program has the full support of Delaware fire officials and many of the meetings have been held in local fire halls at their request.

Jester also devotes much of his time to helping Delaware farmers prevent costly on-farm accidents. He is co-founder of the Delmarva Safety Association.

An award also went to Kent county agricultural agent Ed Kee for his work as an Outstanding New Agent. Kee, who joined the county staff in 1978, was active in helping farmers form the Delaware Vegetable Growers Association.

He has also helped conduct on-farm demonstrations on drip irrigation and potato production. Last summer

the agent organized a corn and swine tour to Nebraska for Delaware farmers, and a vegetable tour to New Jersey.

Two Outstanding Staff awards were also given. Graphic designer Monroe Givens was recognized for his contributions in the production of extension educational materials, including publications, exhibits, posters and slides. Givens has received several awards from his professional association and

the printing industry for his publication designs.

The other staff award went to Doris Ciendaniel Rogers, senior secretary in the Sussex county extension office at Georgetown. She retired after 20 years of service, on the same day the award was announced.

During the business meeting which followed the above presentations, Epsilon Sigma Phi officers for the coming year were introduced. These include: (president) Jerry Webb, extension agricultural

editor; (vice president) John McDaniell, extension specialist in agricultural chemicals; (secretary) Jean Cranston, Kent county home economist; and (treasurer) Richard Fowler, extension livestock specialist.

Epsilon Sigma Phi was founded in 1927 as the national honorary extension fraternity. The Delaware chapter was chartered in 1937. One of the fraternity's main goals is to promote professionalism among extension service workers.

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Researchers to model broiler ammonia cycle

GEORGETOWN, Del. — Norman E. Collins and Ernest W. Walpole of the University of Delaware department of agricultural engineering have received a grant from the Delaware State Energy Office to model the ammonia cycle in broiler houses.

Ammonia is a recurring problem for the Delmarva broiler grower. Growers can smell ammonia in the broiler house when the concentration reaches 20 parts per million, and their eyes and nasal passages may become irritated at concentrations above 40 parts per million.

Broiler weight is affected when ammonia concentrations reach 50 parts per million. Recent research demonstrates that by 49 days of age, broilers exposed to this level of ammonia will average almost .4 pounds lighter than those grown in an ammonia free environment.

Temperature is a critical

factor in the release of ammonia from poultry litter. Sudden increases in broiler house temperature allow a release of gaseous ammonia from the litter water. Heat also increases bacterial activity that breaks down the nitrogen in the fecal material into ammonia.

Excessive moisture content in the litter also improves conditions for these bacteria to create ammonia.

At present, the only practical recourse for a grower with a broiler house ammonia problem is to increase ventilation. This

takes energy.

On a winter flock, the additional ventilation would require 12 to 16 more gallons of LP gas per thousand birds than the amount normally required for moisture control. Chemical controls now on the market cost even more to use than the cost of the additional fuel.

The ammonia model should provide insights into the critical temperatures and moisture levels that trigger ammonia releases. This information should ultimately result in better management techniques for handling the problem.

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