

How to beat alfalfa insect oats

LEBANON — Sweeping alfalfa fields with an insect net is becoming an established practice for an increasing number of Pennsylvania farmers who monitor pest populations and spray alfalfa only when there is need. As one grower remarked, it saves energy and spray materials. This in turn gives a better image with people who are concerned about the use of too much spray material."

Last year, 20 farmers in Lebanon County used the alfalfa insect management program developed by Penn State entomologists. They were trained to monitor fields and evaluate damage from alfalfa weevil and potato leafhopper. Farmers found damage and populations varied among farms.

Lebanon County Extension Agents Newton J. Bair and Denis W. Hoke estimated at least \$6000 worth of pesticide

was eliminated because it was not needed.

In Adams County, seven farmers used insect nets to monitor populations of potato leafhopper in alfalfa during the 1979 crop season. Extension Agricultural Agent John H. Schwartz says these farmers reduced by two the number of sprays that normally would have been applied.

Schwartz notes, "The first three cuttings did not require spraying for this insect."

Other Adams County growers were advised by Schwartz about the best time to spray for alfalfa weevil. This increased the effectiveness of the spray. He says, "The advice was based on tabulation of degree days." For some farmers the information eliminated one spray application.

Bair and Hoke report the alfalfa weevil management program used by Lebanon County farmers put the pesticide on the crop at optimum times and saved many more dollars by giving better control.

Farmers and university personnel report that some

effects of the program are hard to evaluate. They can't put a figure on reduced damage to plants due to fewer trips over fields. Nor is it easy to put a value on improved management of the crop by a farmer who periodically walks over his fields.

Extension Entomology Specialist Stanley Gesell says that across the state in 1979 both alfalfa weevil and potato leafhopper populations were below the economic threshold in most fields.

About 200 farmers following the program cut back on the usual number of sprays for weevil or leafhopper. About 90 percent of the farmers saved three spray applications. Another 10 percent avoided two applications, Gesell said.

He estimates time involved in monitoring a 20 acre field for weevils and leafhoppers required about two hours. That's about six minutes and 50 cents per acre, at \$5 per hour for labor.

Gesell says the average savings per grower was about \$20 per acre during the 1979 crop year.

Another measure of the program is interest shown by those not participating. Around the state the neighbors of farmers in the 1979 program noticed the results and are asking for information this year.

Alfalfa growers interested in using the Penn State insect management program this spring should contact the agricultural agent at the office of extension service located in the county where the growers resides.

Estate Planning Stressed

NEW DANVILLE — The importance of good estate planning was outlined by Richard Denison, of the staff of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, at the Spring Banquet of the Lancaster County Farmers' Association Tuesday night.

"Estate planning involves some of the most important farm financial decisions to be made," Denison said.

The four major objectives of estate planning were outlined by Denison. These include providing for the surviving spouse, minor children and disabled dependents, movement of the farm to the next generation, equitable distribution to heirs and keeping tax liability to a minimum.

He defined a will and use of a trust as two basic effective tools to use in estate planning.

Denison heads both the PFA Legal Staff and Farm

Management Business Analysis.

Reports on their attendance at the Youth Conference were given by Nelson Shaibly and Owen Hartz. This year's conference will be held at Elizabethtown College June 24-27. Names of candidates to attend the conference, a male and a female student who have completed their junior or senior high school years, are now being accepted.

In his president's message, Earl Newcomer reported that the county's membership goal of 1,301 had been topped by two members.

The evening's program also included a slide program of displays at Farm-City Week at Park City and a humorous skit by Mowery Frey and Marty Armstrong based on the Abbott-Costello "Who's on First" routine.

Western riding clinic held

CLEMENTON — Rocky Dare, professional horse trainer from Salem, N.J. conducted a western riding clinic for 4-H members at the Camden County 4-H Center last Saturday.

"4-H'ers gained practical experience at the clinic", said Joan Podosek, 4-H leader with the Silver Spurs Club and secretary-treasurer with the Camden County 4-H Equine Advisory Board. "Rocky covered western equitation, western

pleasure riding and riding and reigning categories," Podosek concluded.

All participants attended the clinic with their horses and were evaluated on their riding habits.

The experience the 4-H'ers received at the clinic will assist them as they prepare for the Camden County Western Qualifying shows, May 10, June 7 and 28, all held at the 4-H Center at Lakeland.

Hunterdon 4-H Horse Council busy schedule

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — At the March meeting of the Hunterdon County 4-H Horse Council, it was announced that the mare for the Quarter Horse Breeding Project will not be available this year.

However, there is a free

stud service at Doll House Farm to a grey thoroughbred, 15.3 hands.

The Equestrian Contest will be held June 26.

The mandatory rules meeting for qualifying shows has been set for April 24. Members must attend this meeting and bring their up-

to-date record books with them in order to show at the qualifying shows.

Other coming events include: the treasure hunt, May 17; two work days, April 26 and May 4; and the State 4-H Horse Show, August 23. Reported by Nancy Funkhouser.

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