

Mushroom growers to seek congressional import relief

HARRISBURG — A Pennsylvania Farmers Union sponsored bus-in to Washington D.C. will help growers tell Congress how it feels to be growing American mushrooms while foreign imports have risen to account for more than 50 percent of consumption.

About 40 growers are expected to leave Oxford Shopping Mall June 3, at 6 p.m., to promote the idea of

federal legislation limiting imports.

Richard King, a Nottingham grower and local chairman of the bus-in, said, "Over the past several years we have found Administrations unresponsive to limiting import quotas to save domestic growers and processors. It's about time we try the Congress. We can only tighten our belts so far."

The bus-in idea was the suggestion of Chester County Farmers Union President John Kimble. He called a meeting six weeks ago at the request of growers being forced to sell local mushrooms at less than they cost to produce. A Washington office Farmers Union lobbyist was on hand to provide advice.

"The bus has been nearly filled in less than three

weeks," said Leonard Zemaitis, Administrative Director of the Pennsylvania Farmers Union.

"We have arranged the trip to provide an opportunity for these Chester County growers and processors to tell their plight to House and Senate leaders. Each grower will become a full time lobbyist for two days."

June 4 will begin with a

briefing session conducted by the Washington staff of the National Farmers Union. The group then will hear and have an opportunity to question speakers from the President's Office of Special Trade Negotiator and from the President's Domestic Staff.

At lunch they will be greeted by NFU President, George Stone, who already has committed the National Farmers Union to helping solve the mushroom import problem.

That afternoon will be spent calling on members of the Subcommittee on International Trade of the Senate Finance Committee. Senators Heinz and Schweiker will meet the entire delegation in late afternoon.

Thursday will be spent on the House side, again in

teams of growers, calling on the 21 members of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade.

Following this, certain teams will call on selected members from Pennsylvania as well as others in a position to help the import limiting legislation. The bus will return to Oxford the evening of June 5.

On June 9 the Farmers Union organization will formally testify before the International Trade Commission to further document the harm rising mushroom import quotas are causing American producers.

Growers or others interested in accompanying this bus-in to Washington should contact the Pennsylvania Farmers Union. The phone number is 717-232-9648.

Mixing hybrids may hurt yield

LANCASTER — A field mixture of two corn hybrids that differ in maturity in sometimes suggested as a way of improving pollination. While there are logical reasons pro and con, there isn't much research data that directly supports the theory.

When you boil it all down, the only time the practice can be beneficial is when stress growing conditions cause silking delay and, even then, only the early hybrid in the mixture can benefit. It is conceivable that the late hybrid in a mixture could be hurt more than if in a pure stand.

It is normal for pollen shedding to commence a couple of days before receptive silks emerge on an individual corn plant. This biologic principle makes hybrid seed production feasible.

Under moderate heat and/or drought stress, silk emergence is delayed but pollen shedding is not. The spread may stretch to several days and the result may be poor seed set due to scarcity of viable pollen.

A later hybrid starts shedding pollen later; if

timed just right, it might enhance seed set of the earlier hybrid in a mixture. There would be nothing to help the later hybrid if it experienced delayed silking.

In fact, in a 50:50 mixture where there would be only half the number of late hybrid plants, the total pollen available to pollinate each late hybrid ear would be reduced by half, says DeKalb Agronomist Wayne Fowler.

It is sometimes suggested that single crosses are more vulnerable to poor pollination than three or four-way hybrids. Observation and experience does not support that position.

In detailed notes taken on plant development by DeKalb's corn research center, all three hybrid types exhibited the same amount of delay (1.3 day average) between first pollen shed and first silk appearance.

Three-way hybrids shed pollen an average of 4.8 days, single crosses 5.2, and four-ways 6.0. Three-way and four-way hybrids went from first silk to full silk in 5.0 days; single crosses averaged 5.2. There was not

enough difference is normal tassel and silk development to distinguish between hybrid types.

The usual experience where hybrids are mixed is that the performance of the mixture equals the average performance of its component hybrids. Pure-stands of the best hybrid in a pair almost invariably outperform the mixture. Part of this may be due to competition for light, space, or nutrients.

If one hybrid is taller,

Heart of Penn goat co-op to meet

DORNSIFE — Heart of Penn Dairy Goat Breeders' co-op will meet on Saturday, June 7 at 8 p.m. at the Binetti home near Wapwallopen.

After the business meeting, which will deal mainly with arrangements for the group's June 15 fun show, the group discussion will center on "Spring Considerations." Those attending are asked to bring a list of their questions, ideas, problems and suggestions to share.

more vigorous, or faster growing than the other, it will reduce performance of the other one in a mixture.

Practical considerations lead us to suggest a recommendation: always use hybrids of three or more distinct maturities but plant each one separately, either in different fields or in large, solid blocks making up portions of each field.

This way, each hybrid can be planted at its optimum rate and harvested at its optimum time.

Refreshments will be served.

Anyone interested in dairy goats is invited to attend. You do not need to be a member.

For information or directions contact Roberto Molaro 717/758-8359.

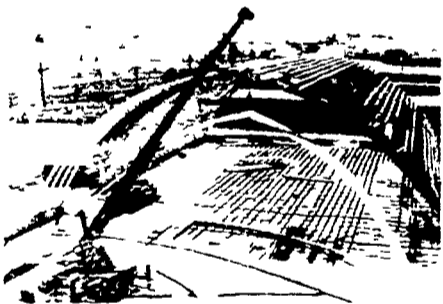
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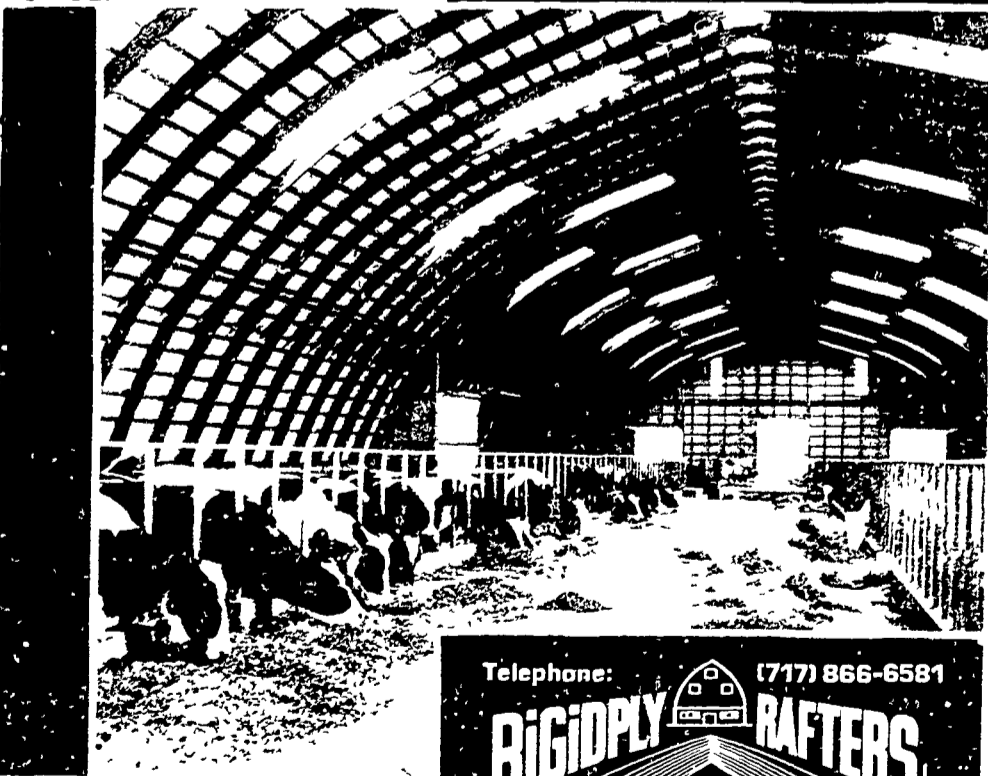
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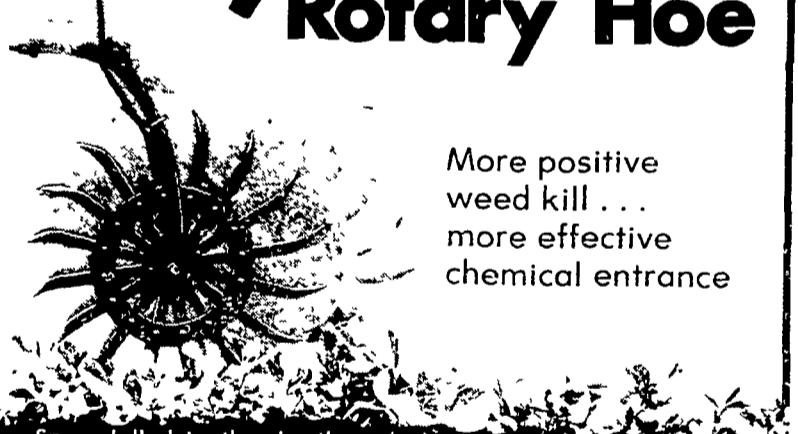
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