

Biggest, best Ag Progress Days next month

UNIVERSITY PARK — Final preparations are underway to accommodate the more than 15,000 visitors a day expected at Penn State's Rock Springs Research Center next month.

"All indications are that this year's annual Agricultural Progress Days will be the biggest and best ever," says Joseph Harrington, Penn State agronomy professor and general chairman of the

three-day event. "It's more than a day in the sun," says Dr. Harrington. Educational displays and commercial exhibits from Canada and the eastern United States are growing in numbers and

quality, providing a strong regional reputation for the event. Again this year, visitors will see alternative energy systems and the technology for using them. Harrington says that

systems include wood-burning and forest improvement methods, solar methods for heating buildings and drying crops from gardens to commercial farms, and improved efficiency of farm-size methane and gasohol digesters operating on grain and crop residues.

living programs, and youth activities.

The theatre tent, a popular change of pace, will feature musical entertainment each mid-day. Presentations on everything from home horticulture to home safety will be scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A small tent nearby will offer puppet shows and play activities for young show visitors.

"A record number of commercial exhibitors will display goods and services for agriculture," points out Harrington. About 225 commercial companies will be exhibiting about \$20 million in products. "Some of the world's most sophisticated farm equipment will be displayed," adds Harrington.

The 1980 Agricultural Progress Days will be held August 19-21 at the Rock Springs Agricultural Research Center, located nine miles west of State College on Route 45 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Featured exhibits include energy and resource efficient animal and crop production. Back again will be the special exhibits and working demonstrations in the areas of on-farm waste disposal, soil and water conservation, and safety.

Ag Progress Days is sponsored by Penn State's College of Agriculture in cooperation with machinery companies and numerous agricultural associations and agencies and is an official part of Penn State's 125th anniversary celebration.

The midway area will focus on field equipment, farm supplies, seeds, fertilizers, silos, farm chemicals, and other farm and home supplies.

The road to Rock Springs began even before last year's Progress Days were over and has become one of the largest outdoor activities in the East. Dr. Harrington emphasizes that the activities are planned to be of interest to both the rural and urban visitor.

Also on display will be chain saws, lawn and garden equipment, sprayers, horticulture exhibits, family

Farmland remains prime asset in Northeast says SCS

HARRISBURG — "Homes, highways and other urban expansion development are replacing our nation's best farmland at the rate of 1 million acres a year," said Graham T. Munkittrick, State Conservationist for the USDA, Soil Conservation Service, headquartered here.

acres than their larger western counterparts, he points out.

"These facts and several others are pointed out in a recent USDA Agricultural Land Study," said Munkittrick.

"They indicate that we do not have a valuable farm industry in the northeast and that we do need to keep our best farmland in agriculture. Otherwise, our standard of living will suffer within a generation."

"Another 2 million acres of lesser quality farmland surrenders to the bulldozers every 12 months," he added. "This serious threat to our food and fiber resource is meeting some local opposition. But much more action is needed to protect the nearly 19 million acres of important farmland we still have in the 13 northeastern states."

The National Agricultural Land Study found that Pennsylvania is losing 128,000 acres of farmland per year. Of this amount, 42,000 acres are top quality farmland. If the present rate of loss continues, this State could be without farmland early in the coming century.

According to Munkittrick, some economic experts say we should write off the agricultural industry in the northeast. Yet, it is interesting to note that acre for acre the northeastern states have a higher percentage of prime farmland than many larger midwest and western states. In fact, some northeastern states have more total prime farm

land. The National Agricultural Land Study found that Pennsylvania is losing 128,000 acres of farmland per year. Of this amount, 42,000 acres are top quality farmland. If the present rate of loss continues, this State could be without farmland early in the coming century.

The land study indicates that Pennsylvania has more prime farmland than Oregon and Washington combined, while New York has nearly as much as both of those west coast states.

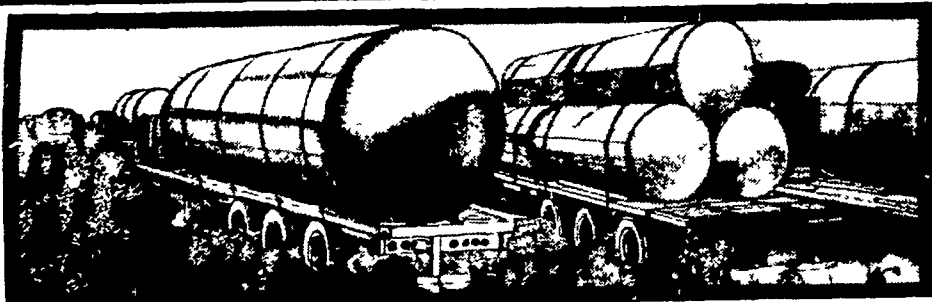
Nevada, Utah or New Mexico. They have nearly as much important farmland as Florida, in spite of the fact that Florida has three times more total acres than Maryland and New Jersey.

Massachusetts, with only 8,257 square miles of land, has as much important farmland as New Mexico, with 121,666 square miles of land.

California, with 158,693 square miles of land and 7.8 million acres of important farmland, is considered one of our great agricultural states. Yet, five of the smaller northeastern states—Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut and Rhode Island, plus Virginia — with just about half the total land area, have the same amount of important farmland.

"The point I want to make is that we still have a lot of prime farmland here in the northeast, but we need to protect it and keep it in our food and fiber production," says Munkittrick. "With our dense urban population areas, we must expand our towns and cities, but we

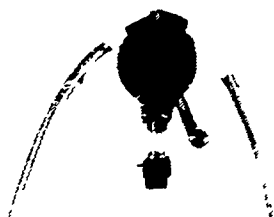
should develop them on less productive land. Once our best farmland is covered with urban developments, it's gone forever."



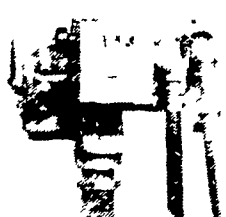
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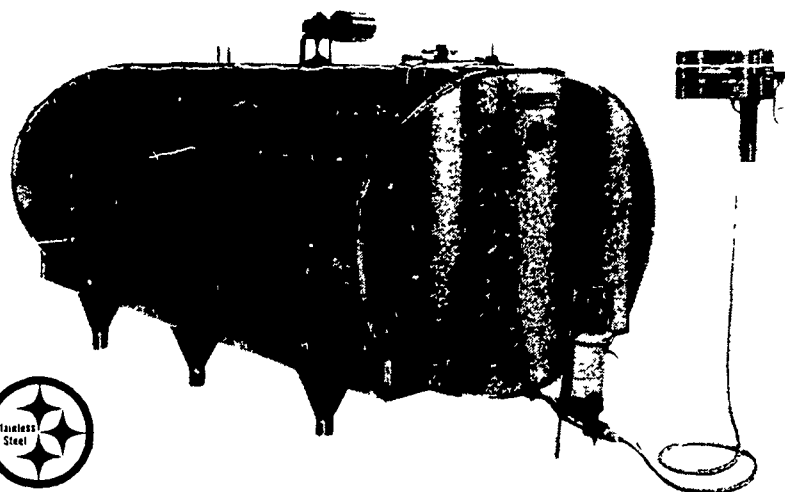
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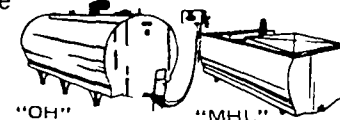
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