

# Farmers protest

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pesticide derivatives or heavy metal content.

"We haven't asked for an analysis of the pesticides and metals primarily because this waste water comes from food processing. As far as the fruit is concerned, the ag department takes care of that," he added.

According to Penn State's Robert Cunningham, a soils expert, DER should have an analysis of the heavy metals that might be present because they could interfere with crops grown on irrigated land.

"Cadmium and lead, or any nonessential elements have shown in the past that they could be accumulated in fruit. Once cadmium enters the food chain, it's difficult to get out.

"If food that contains this element is eaten over long periods of time, it has been shown to interfere with the body's metabolic processes, causing a syndrome liver disease," Cunningham explained.

Theoretically, he said, it would be possible for the elements to concentrate in the plant's wash water, and then be taken up by the trees and fruit after the water is sprayed on the land.

If there are no heavy metals, virus, disease or pesticides present in the water, Cunningham commented, the spreading of the waste water on the soil would be beneficial to crop production.

However he noted the rate of application would have to be strictly monitored.

"If the water is acidic, the irrigation process would make the soils more acid — making it essential to apply more lime.

"And care would have to be taken not to saturate the soil. This would lead to water logged soils that would drown the trees; and there would be a problem with the water channeling and running off the sloping land rather than soaking in."

As far as ground water

contamination goes, the Penn State professor noted that studies have proven that when there is 3 to 4 feet of soil for the water to filter through, there is little chance of contamination.

"In graduate student studies here at the university, we've looked at application rates of 1-2 inches and have found that 1 inch applied during the growing season is optimum for the soil and safety.

"You have to understand that with a 1 inch application rate, you are adding 30 inches of water to the soil in addition to the 40 inches of normal rainfall.

"In our studies, we have found that after 5 to 10 years of application at this rate, the soils show evidence of wetness.

"I personally don't see anything wrong with irrigating the fruit processing water as long as there are no contaminants in the process — I wouldn't imagine there would be because we're talking about products used for food.

"Spreading the water on the soil will allow crops to use the nutrients in the water, while the organic matter in it will improve the soil's tilth.

"I think these organic wastes should be encouraged to be spread on the land — we can't keep them in one little barrel," Cunningham concluded.

One Adams County farmer who has been farming land owned by Knouse Foods which has been irrigated for the past 15 years claims that the artificial water on the land is "terrific".

Stanley Wolfe has been farming the Knouse land for the past six years. He commented that the 34-38 inches of artificial water that was sprayed on his corn fields this year has made the difference between his yield of about 80 bushels to the acre of almost perfect corn to the county's average of 6-15 bushels to the acre.

Wolfe noted, however, that before he was farming the

land there were problems. "The runoff was terrible" — cattle wouldn't drink the water in the local streams."

All this changed, he said, because he started planting corn on the fields. "The corn pulled the water out of the ground. I'd be leery of putting it on land unless it was corned to take out the moisture."

Wolfe explained the 50 acres of irrigated land he's farming is an Arendtsville silt loam. He said he plows it one year and chisels it the next in order to break up the ground so that the water can soak in.

He also noted there are diversions on the land to carry most of the water that runs off back to a holding pond where it is stored.

Wolfe admitted they "over did it" last year when they applied 50 inches of artificial water during a naturally wet year. That was just too much, he said.

As far as what's in the water, Wolfe said it's "industrial waste water" which he believes contains insecticides. He noted that DER works with Knouse Foods on the application.

According to Roger Sprague, he and the 300 citizens who have signed a petition against the proposed irrigation plan in Franklin Township are aware of the Knouse Foods irrigation fields. However they remain concerned about the contamination of Mummasburg Run which flows into Marsh Creek, the water supply for the Borough of Gettysburg.

"The company processes food until January and February. What will happen when they irrigate their waste water on frozen ground? And what about times when the rainfall is excessive?"

Sprague voiced his apprehensions when he remarked he's heard some rumors that the Knouse Food waste water program was not doing well. "What I hear doesn't make me more confident in the Musselman plan."

When Kenneth Lawver of the Pet Milk company was asked about their proposed irrigation plan at the Musselman plant, he said "We have no information available on the irrigation. And we don't care to have any information published until our application is completed."

Before DER approves the permit application, there will be a public hearing, said Jim Donato. He added that it has not been scheduled at the present time because the application was not complete.

Sprague commented that the permit hearing would allow the public to take issue with the proposed plans if there were not adequate precautions to control pollution and odor. He said the protest group's attorney has discussed the possibilities of requiring the company to file a bond.

Representing the group is Harrisburg attorney Michael Davis, also the legal representative of the York County organization OUCH (Opposing Unnecessary Chemical Hazards), citizens fighting a chemical dump near Seven Valleys.

"We would prefer the processing plant upgrade its filtration system to the point where the waste water can be discharged right into the creek at the Biglerville plant," said Sprague.

He compared the 240,000 gallons per day of waste water involved in the Musselman plant to a

comparable amount handled by Holly Milk Cooperative's processing plant where he ships his milk.

"DER required us to upgrade our treatment of waste water so that we can discharge into the stream at the milk plant," he said. "The latest estimates show that the plant with modifications will run just under \$1 million. That's what it will cost Musselman to pump their water from Biglerville to Arendtsville and then irrigate it."

## Seminar in horse anatomy tonight

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Some novel concepts on understanding the anatomy of horses will be presented this evening at a seminar on the University of Maryland campus in College Park.

The speaker will be James R. Rooney, DVM, of New Castle, Del. His topic will be "Biomechanics of the Horse — Normal and Abnormal."

Dr. Rooney is a veterinary pathologist for ICI Americas, Inc., at Wilmington, Del., and an adjunct professor at the New Bolton center of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine near Kennett Square, Pa.

His appearance is being sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Maryland and the Maryland Farriers Association. The meeting will run from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Fire Fighters room at the Center of Adult Education on the western edge of the College Park campus.

All interested persons are invited to attend, according to Dr. Edwin E. Goodwin, Extension horse specialist at the University of Maryland.

In closing Sprague said, "We don't know what we're getting into . . . but we have a right to know as residents just what Musselman's plans are and what type of impact they will have on us and our farms.

"I've done a lot of soul searching when asked how I would feel if Musselman had to close down because of this issue. I'm sure I don't want to see that happen. But, I think it's been proven, we don't need industry regardless of what."

There will be a \$4 registration fee, payable at the door.

Dr. Goodwin noted that the guest speaker's inquisitive mind and vast experience have put him in the spotlight of progressive and sometimes controversial concepts. His presentation is expected to be a critical, analytical and in-depth study of how horses are built and how they move. It will also cover stress location and degree, performance, soundness and unsoundness.



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