

Bradford-Sullivan farmers discuss deer damage

BY JANE BRESEE
Staff Correspondent
WYSOX — Membership co-chairmen, Milford Kinsman and Bruce Bresee, of the Bradford-Sullivan County Farmers' Association

received star pins of Recognition for Achievement in membership in 1980. The presentation was made by Jeff Patton, Regional Organization

Director for Region 6, at the annual dinner meeting of the farm group held October 6 at the Wysox Fire Hall. Patton also gave the men each a gift of a wall clock in appreciation for their hard

work, stating that the Bradford-Sullivan County group was the top gain county in the state increasing the 1979 membership of 809 farm families in 1979 to 918 in 1980.

Kevin Ferris of New Albany, president of the bi-county farm organization, welcomed the 200 farm family members present.

identical response on the extent of damage.

The survey also included 6400 farmers whose names were listed on county Extension mailing lists. Much to everyone's surprise, Palmer said, 53 percent of the questionnaires were returned, more than any other survey conducted.

All farmers agreed there was economic damage from the deer, 19 percent had serious damage. Few farmers reported damage in specific dollars, but the total of those who did was \$900,000. Palmer said that a calculated projection for 60,000 farms in the state would put the total figure to \$22.5 million, ironically, the Game Commission annual budget in 1979.

Corn was the major item listed as damaged, but alfalfa, tomatoes, potatoes, peas, and beans were also mentioned, as well as nursery crops, especially in Indiana county.

Control methods being tried included human hair, moth balls, hot sauce, blood meal, and other unusual substances, but fencing and repellants proved the most effective. Experiments conducted by Palmer and his associates found that Big Game repellent containing thiram, a registered pesticide, to be the most effective repellent. The cost of the eight foot deer fence was considered prohibitive due to its need for constant maintenance, Palmer said. Contrary to popular belief, deer will crawl under a fence rather than jump over it.

The two most effective fences for small fields are the three wire four figure fence and the five wire, both using high tension wire which snaps back and won't break, making the maintenance, practically zero. Both kinds are electrified with an energizer costing \$250 from New Zealand. They won't ground out, don't spark, and have a high voltage of from five to seven thousand volts.

Palmer showed many slides of plots of various crops in different parts of the state assessed for deer damage. One alfalfa field was nearly foraged clean by the deer.

Farmers as a whole, Palmer concluded, prefer hunting and wild life management to control the deer population, but a few prefer shooting. One farmer

had shot 60 deer in one year eating in one small field. Ferris introduced the dairy princesses Luann Shedden from Bradford County, and Candy Woodhead from Sullivan County. Both spoke briefly about their adventures as dairy princess.

Fred Tiffany, state director from Litchfield, said every county in the state made a gain membership resulting in the total membership of PFA at 22,580. He declared 1980 a banner year for farm legislation citing the Milk Security Bill as a major victory for the dairy farmer.

Annette Schucker, vice-president and chairman of the policy department committee, read the 19 policies to the group. According to Schucker, these "grassroots" policies will be funneled through a state policy development committee and later voted upon by the delegates at the annual meeting to be held in Hershey in November. Registered lobbyists of the PFA in Harrisburg are dedicated to make policy become law.

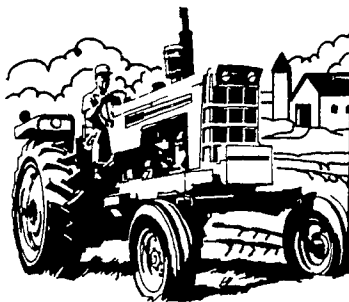
The group voted to accept most of the policies presented. Many pertained to the dairy industry including parity, casein imports, brucellosis reactors, etc.

Directors elected for a two-year term were Annette Schucker, Andy Dewing, Kimford Kinsman, Carl Gore, Elwell Kingsley, Scott Shedden and Robert Allis. Delegates to the annual meeting were elected and the meeting adjourned.

The Bradford-Sullivan County Farmers Association is part of the PFA and is affiliated with the American Farm Bureau, the largest general farm organization in the nation.

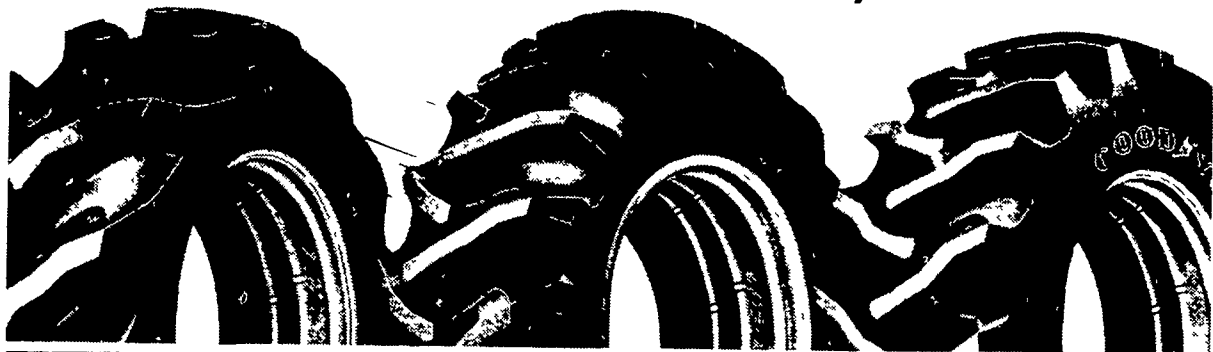


Kevin Ferris, left, president of the Bradford-Sullivan County Farmers Association, Luann Shedden, Bradford County Dairy Princess, and Bruce Bresee, former membership chairman, share a joke at the annual meeting of the farm group.



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