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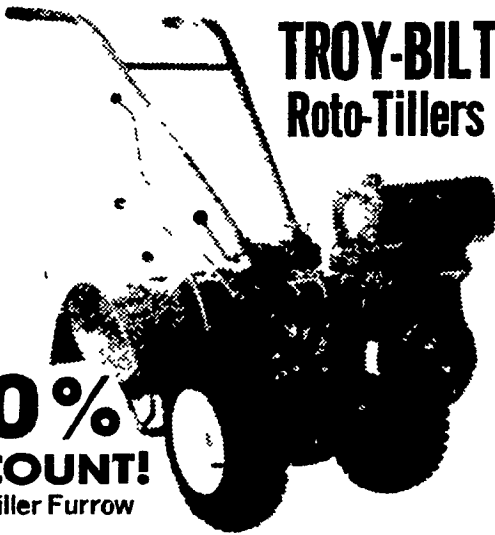
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November time to mulch strawberries

MEDIA — Early to late November is the time to mulch strawberry beds in Pennsylvania. The exact date depends on local conditions in your area of the state

According to James J. McKeehen, Delaware County extension agricultural agent a rule of thumb is to apply mulch when the plants have experience one or two heavy

frosts A heavy frost will cause the strawberry leaves to turn dark reddish green. Mulching is essential where plants are grown thru black polyethylene mulch.

A light covering of mulch protects the plants from severe winter temperatures and prevents "heaving" of the shallow rooted strawberry from alternate freezing and thawing by tending to keep the soil at an even temperature. If the plants are heaved out of the ground they will dry out and die.

However, even slight heaving causes root damage which may allow disease organisms to enter. If the grower delays removal of the mulch in the spring, then the plants will remain dormant later in the spring. This may delay blossoming often past the critical frost period. If mulch is to be removed early, to encourage early maturity, the grower should be prepared to control spring frosts with sprinkler irrigation.

Remember that spring frosts result in severe losses to the best portion of the developing crop.

Settled mulch three to four inches thick makes good protection. This will require three to four tons per acre depending on whether or not the whole bed is mulched or only the rows. If the whole bed is mulched, next spring's weeds will be reduced - unless, of course, the mulching material contained many weeds and seeds.

Marsh hay is relatively weed-free. Straw from specially grown, immature grain fields or carefully harvested fields is relatively weed-free as well as fresh straw which has been subjected to prolonged weathering. Proper application of a herbicide in fall or early spring can control volunteer weeds.

Materials usually used for mulching are marsh hay, wheat, rye, barley, or oat straw. Chopped cornstalks, ground cobs, sawdust, bark chips, peat moss, pine needles, broom sedge, and sudan grass will be used if care is taken not to smother the crowns. Leaves are less suitable since they tend to pack and may smother the plants

Hunting restricted in big game season

COUDERSPORT — Pennsylvania's hunters are reminded by the Game Commission that seasons for nearly all wild birds and wild animals will be closed during the regular firearms deer seasons, and any possible extension of the seasons.

The restriction will also apply during the bear season in the 29 counties where bear hunting will be permitted on November 24. The bear season this year will be open in the counties of Bradford, Cameron, Carbon, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Elk, Forest, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, McKean, Mifflin, Monroe, Pike, Potter, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren, Wayne and Wyoming.

In the 38 counties which will be closed to bear hunting, regular small game

and furbearer hunting is permissible on November 24.

During the regular firearms deer and bear seasons (in areas where deer and bear hunting are permitted), the only species that may be lawfully hunted are deer and bear and migratory game birds which are still "in season."

Racoons may be hunted statewide between sunset and one-half hour before sunrise during the firearms deer and bear seasons.

The ban on hunting most species in big game seasons started in 1974. It is designed to prevent shooters from hunting for or killing a second deer or bear after having taken their first whitetail or bruin. Previously, such shooters generally claimed they were hunting for foxes, chumpmunks, etc. The ban on hunting most species now precludes giving this reason as an excuse

Lebanon DHIA

(Continued from Page C30)

Lebanon County dairymen had a return above feed costs of \$1215 per animal, or nearly \$50 per cow better than the state average. Most economists regard the return above feed costs as the best indication of a dairy's profitability.

Bair did offer one word of caution to dairymen. He noted there is an excess of milk in the market and warned dairymen against any big expansion in cow numbers

He encouraged efficiency in production as the way to make more profit without increasing workload or overburdening the already glutted market

State Director Harold Bollinger, during his presentation, told farmers the top herd in Pennsylvania is a 16 cow herd owned by Tom Williams, Bradford.

Williams' 16 Holsteins pumped out an average of 25,000 pounds milk and 975 pounds butterfat.

Bollinger also told members there will be a new one story 40 by 80 foot DHIA testing building erected at Penn State at a cost of

\$293,000. That cost will be paid by dairymen.

He said the cost works out to one cent per cow per month for 15 years.

He also said the DHIA testing fees will be raised to 31 cents per cow per month for all animals on all programs. The increase, the first since 1977, goes into effect on January 1, 1981.

Introduced to County dairymen was Michael O'Conner, Penn State dairy specialist in charge of reproductive problems in cattle.

He told dairymen progesterone testing is not a certain pregnancy test. It is only 85 percent effective in saying which cows are pregnant. But it is 95 percent effective in diagnosing those which are not pregnant, he said.

Penn State does not do the test, but Cornell will do tests for Pennsylvania farmers interested in the program. It takes five to seven days to get test results returned to the farm.

About 250 people attended the meeting which was held at the Schaefferstown Fire Hall.

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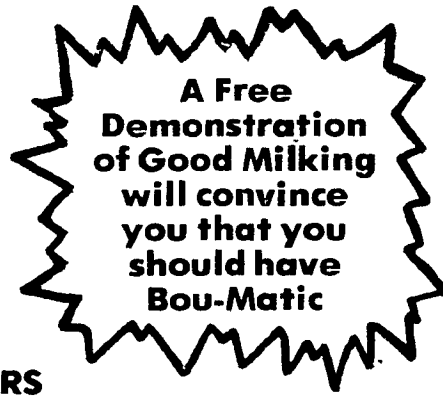
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