

Kaylor is Lebanon's Outstanding Conservation Farmer

BY SHEILA MILLER

LEBANON — This year's Outstanding Conservation Cooperator in Lebanon County is Marvin Kaylor, a North Annville Township farmer. Kaylor was presented with the award here on Tuesday evening during the monthly meeting of the Lebanon County Conservation District.

The recognition Kaylor received is the result of over five years of implementing a sound conservation program on his 165 acre farm. Kaylor stated his move to a conservative method of farming was the result of witnessing erosion in his cropfields.

After Kaylor purchased the farm from his father, Irvin, in 1972, he farmed some of the sliding hills that had formerly been used as pasture.

"I just got tired of dragging wagons over gutters," he said. So in 1975, the first of the truly contour strips were laid out on the farm.

Since then, a total of 35 acres of strips have been established on his cropland fields. Kaylor pointed out the entire farm has been planned for strips. "It's just a matter of working them into my crop rotation over a period of years."

Then, in 1977, Kaylor began to work on some of his low-lying land that borders the old Union Canal bed along the Swatara Creek. Over the next two years, more than 12,800 feet of subsurface drainage was buried in the flat, turning the formerly 27 acres into Kaylor's best corn ground.

The flats were further protected with the installation of 2150 feet of diversion in 1979. The

diversion intercepts the excess surface water that runs down the slopes of adjacent cropfields. The runoff is carried by the diversion around the flats and empties into the old canal bed.

Kaylor, like many other Lebanon County farmers, experienced a reduced corn yield this year. Instead of his normal 100 bushels to the acre, he said he was lucky to get 40 bushels per acre this year. But, said Kaylor, he did get 100 bushels to the acre in one field - the flats.

"Installing that tile and diversion made the difference of 60 bushels to the acre. Without the diversion, it would have been too wet to get in the field this spring to plant the corn."

"Figuring corn prices at \$4 a bushel, it won't take too many more years for that field to pay for the conservation work."

After Kaylor harvests his field corn in the fall, he explained he either sows a rye cover crop in the strips of stalks or he turns in his 25 commercial sows to glean any fallen corn. The strand of electric fence is well respected by the swine, he said. "They won't even cross the fence if it goes down, once they learn it's there."

Each year, Kaylor said, he raises about 100 feeder pigs. He breeds his sows and any home-bred replacement gilts to purebred boars, either Yorkshire or Hampshire. "I try to have mostly white pigs," he said.

In past year, Kaylor pointed out, he also raised some feeder pigs. But with grain prices the way they are, I'm not sure I want to put it into cattle," he remarked.

His future operation may eventually expand into a cow/calf rather than feeding setup. "It will all depend on what my son, Brent, decides to do after he graduates from Penn State," Kaylor said.

One of three of the Kaylor children, Brent is a freshman agriculture engineering student at the university. The Kaylor's other two children are daughter Cindy, married to Dennis Funk, and son Cliff.

Kaylor's wife, Grace, plays a key role in the conservation program, sometimes quite accidentally.

"This past summer when things were so dry, my wife and I went for a walk along the diversion. She noticed dark green lines running across them and wondered whether that could be the tile lines causing the grass to be so green."

"That's what it was alright. And so I marked the tile line with flags. Now if I ever need to extend the drainage, I'll know where to tap into the old line."

How much did all Kaylor's efforts to practice sound soil stewardship cost him? After a moment's pause, he said, "Probably it cost me somewhere between \$9000 and \$10,000 - let's say \$9500."

But, as most conservation farmers have found, Lebanon County's Outstanding Cooperator has found that conservation doesn't cost, it pays. Through his efforts, he is setting an excellent example for others to follow.



Kaylor surveys the conservation accomplishments on his farm in North Annville Township. A diversion and strips ribbon across the sloping farmland, protecting it from erosion.



Fencing his harvested corn strips allows Kaylor to turn his sows in to glean the fallen corn.



Marvin Kaylor, right, receives the plaque for Outstanding Lebanon County Conservation Cooperator from Conservation District Chairman Donald Bollinger.

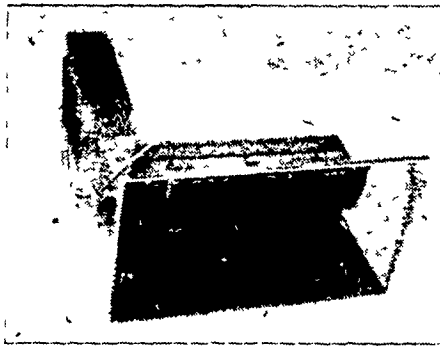
American Royal continues through Nov. 22

KANSAS CITY, Mo — It has been called the greatest show in the nation, a feast of the top beauties and beasts - of the four-legged variety - in the world. It's the American Royal Stock, Horse Show and Fair, now in its 82nd year in the heartland of America.

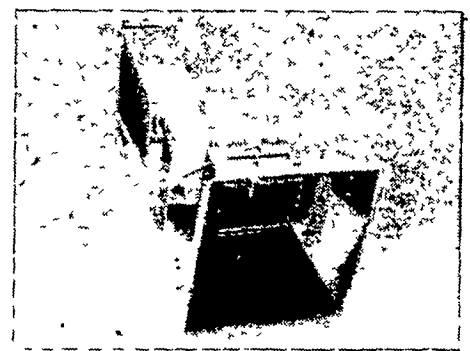
The American Royal, which opened Monday, November 17, and runs through Saturday, November 22, is now receiving international acclaim. The American Royal Center here last year showed more than 4,000 cattle and 3,000 horses. International exhibits in 1979 drew 110 foreign entries from 18 countries, making it the largest exhibition of its kind in the world.

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