

# New York to host tillage conference

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The first Empire Conservation Tillage Conference will be held in Syracuse at the New York State Fairgrounds,

February 19, 1981.

Sponsored by the Empire Chapter of the Soil Conservation Society of America, the one-day meeting is expected to attract farmers and others from around the Northeast who are interested in the latest developments in conservation tillage.

The program will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will feature equipment and supply displays, farmer presentations, and recent research findings.

Farmers will see exhibits and displays by equipment dealers, chemical companies, and seed suppliers. They will be able to talk to commercial dealers about the latest technology. There

will also be non-commercial displays by agencies and other organizations involved in conservation tillage.

The morning program will begin with a presentation by J. Roger Barber, Commissioner, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets on the theme of the conference "A New Era in Northeast Agriculture."

The role of conservation tillage in the Northeast will be discussed by Paul A. Dodd, State Conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in New York.

Featured speaker for the morning will be Mike Sager, an agricultural advisor and farmer from Woodford County, Illinois, who pioneered many of the current conservation tillage

methods. Specific conservation tillage practices in New York will be the subject of Jim Peck, President of ConsulAgr, consulting company of Brookside Laboratories, and farmer from Newark, N.Y. Fitting soil types to tillage practices will be discussed by Steve Probst, State Resource Conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in Illinois.

Rick Koelsch, Energy Specialist for Cornell University Agricultural Engineering Department, will address the energy aspects of conservation tillage.

The afternoon session will feature an Ohio no-till experience presented by Neal

and Nellie Springer, farmers from Knox County, Ohio who have been doing no-till for seven years on their farm with corn, soybeans, small grains and forages.

The remainder of the afternoon will offer discussions on conservation tillage for corn and conservation tillage for small grains and forages as viewed by two panels made up of farmers and specialists.

The panel on tillage for corn will be moderated by Ev Thomas, Regional Extension Specialist on Field Crops.

Panel members will include Andy Burt, farmer from Canandaigua, N.Y., Butch Mattoon, farmer from Phelps, N.Y., and Bill Johnson, farmer from

Orange County, N.Y. The panel on conservation tillage for small grains and forages will consist of Bill Kirby, Regional representative for Ortho-Chevron Chemical Company, Dean Linscott, Cornell Agronomy Department and Lynn Hoffman, Research Farm Manager, Penn State University.

Tickets will be available from local Soil and Water Conservation District offices. The ticket price of \$2 covers admission and a copy of the proceedings.

For additional information on the conference, tickets, or displays, contact Fred Gaffney, Soil Conservation Service, 771 Federal Building, Syracuse, New York 13280.

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## Delaware names new environmental specialist

DOVER, Del. — J. Ross Harris, Jr. has been appointed extension specialist in environmental quality, according to Samuel M. Gwinn, director of the Delaware Extension Service.

In this newly created position, Harris will plan, develop and conduct educational programs to assist farmers and landowners with implementing practices related to the control of rural nonpoint source pollution. He will be working with individual farmers, local watershed groups and others concerned with water quality management planning in Kent and Sussex counties. Harris earned a B.S. in



J. Ross Harris, Jr.

agriculture from the University of Delaware in

1975, and pursued graduate study in Biological and Agricultural Engineering at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, N.C.

Since March of 1979 Harris has been employed as a research associate in the University of Delaware's

department of agricultural engineering.

In his new position he is headquartered at the Kent County Extension Office, which is located in the Wesley Church Education Building, Dover.

## Farmers should expect increased labor costs

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Farmers should expect higher labor costs in 1981, according to John W. Wysong, extension farm management specialist and professor of agricultural economics at the University of Maryland.

Two forces are behind the expected increase, notes Wysong. First, the federal minimum hourly wage will rise from the 1980 level of \$3.10 to \$3.35 on January 1, 1981.

The second force involves the social security tax on employee earnings. The tax rate will not only rise from 6.15 percent to 6.65 percent, but the amount of total income subject to tax will rise from \$25,900 to \$29,700 per year.

Since most hired farm workers earn less than the new level of taxable earnings, their employer will have his tax bill increased to 6.65 percent on all wages paid, reports Wysong.

Several suggestions have been made to offset the impact of rising labor costs

on the price of producing milk and meat, but these suggestions have not been acted on by Congress.

One of these recommendations involves tax incentives for employers who hire youths and give them training on the job. Another proposal is to lower the minimum wage to 75 percent of the base rate for youths under 20 years of age. During rough economic times, young, inexperienced workers have the most trouble finding and holding a job, notes Wysong.

Passage of legislation which permits faster rates of depreciation on new equipment and building investments is still another area to help decrease the impact of rising labor costs.

Efficiencies in other areas of farm management also can help to lower the costs of each unit of output.

Assistance and additional information on farm management is available through county extension agricultural agents.

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