

Berks District to study Perkiomen and Northkill watersheds

LEESPORT — It is not unusual for streams to be muddy after a heavy rain, but those concerned about stream water quality suspect there is more than mud in that run-off water. The Berks County Conservation District will be looking into the county's non-point pollution potential in 1981, according to Mary Ann Rumby, Chairman of the District.

The Federal Clean Waters Act authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to work with states to identify these non-point pollution sources.

The District takes a keen interest in the conservation of all natural resources and assists land users in the wise use of soil and water.

"It is the reason for our existence," said Rumby. "This is why we have contracted with the Department of Environmental Resources to look at the land uses in some watersheds in Berks County.

"If we can help some areas where land uses are affecting the quality of our streams, then we want to be able to provide whatever assistance is needed to protect that stream," she added.

Farmers in the Perkiomen and Northkill Watersheds will be consulted to gather specific information concerning the use of conservation practices, livestock manure management and the use of agricultural chemicals.

The land use survey will indicate what kind of help is needed from the Conservation District.

"We plan our program a year or more in advance," said Rumby, "and when we can identify water quality problems, we then know what kind and how much help to put into our program."

"The results of the assessment will determine if public funds should be appropriated to help farmers protect water quality in our watersheds," she concluded.

Hort specialist wins grant

UNIVERSITY PARK — Larry J. Kuhns, assistant professor of horticulture extension at Penn State, was among 13 research scientists awarded \$500 grants by the Horticultural Research Institute, a non-profit organization devoted exclusively to the support and conduct of nursery-related research.

By infecting *Taxus cuspidata* with naturally occurring fungi, known as *mycorrhizae*, Kuhns hopes to reduce the length of time between seed germination and planting in the field.

The grant will be used to purchase time clocks, an irrigation system, and overwintering materials to maintain the plants during the course of the study.

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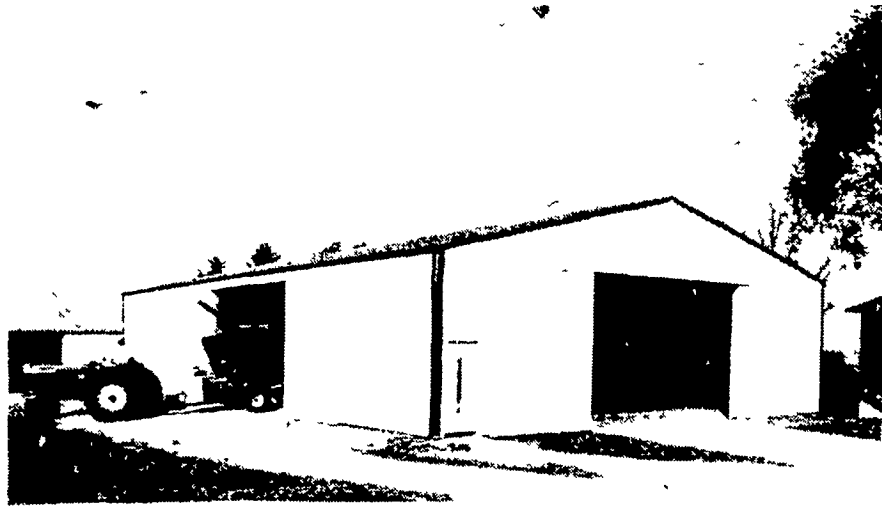
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