

Food future

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some influence on maintaining a productive agriculture at home."

Ensminger emphasized that while the U.S. should be involved in helping developing nations, introducing new technology in them may not always be good for the people there, even if it is profitable.

It's a matter of ethics. "One of the criteria for selection or rejection of technology must be whether it will contribute to a more just society," Ensminger said. "If the answer is no, it should be applied only under extraordinary circumstances."

Calling the world food situation "fragile," Ensminger said the only hope of avoiding a disastrous world food crisis in 1981 will come from a good harvest in the main cereal producing regions.

"Grain imports from the developing countries are expected to reach 94 million tons in June 1981, and will continue to increase through the decade of the 80s."

But even with grain imports, malnutrition and hunger continue. Ensminger said studies showed that two-thirds of the population in the developing countries (1.2 to 1.5 billion) are suffering malnutrition. And of these, he said, "One can assume that more than 1 billion of the developing countries' people

live in continuous fear of hunger."

Both he and Poehlman urged population control.

"The world will lose the food production race unless population growth is drastically curtailed," Poehlman warned.

In his research paper, Sears concentrated mainly on improving wheat which ranks second only to rice as the world's most important food. What he had to say had implications to science and the world food situation in general.

He pointed out that wheat yields haven't been much of a problem — so far. But most of the yield increase has come by replacing low-yield, impure wheats with high-yielding, pure line varieties.

"This process has greatly reduced the genetic variability available to breeders for the further improvement of wheat," Sears reported.

"Variability" is the key word. Without it, plant breeders and farmers would be in a tough spot if a devastating new disease came along.

Such a thump happened in 1970 when southern leaf blight suddenly appeared on the scene and threatened the nation's corn crop. If it hadn't been for a totally different corn types geneticists had salted away in seed vaults, they wouldn't have been able to develop

resistant varieties able to withstand the blight.

Besides supporting Sears' concern for a continuous, solid research base, Breimyer had plenty to say about agricultural policy in general.

He showed special concern about the U.S. posture to withdraw from the international scene.

He said Americans are "flirting with the impulse to run from trouble" and have elected officials who are "pulling in U.S. horns."

"The wish to withdraw (from international involvement) may be

natural, but the cause is futile. The United States cannot stay aloof; it has joined the heightened interdependence among nations."

The American economy and agriculture in particular, he said, depends on the rest of the world as a market, plus a source of such things as oil, fertilizers, minerals, etc.

He said the 1980s will be marked by "more instances of relative scarcity than the burdens of surplus which marked the past 20 years."

He urged changes in policy that would mean more support for agricultural research and accompanying education, more protection of productive land and less emphasis on using farm products for fuel.

Breimyer said the consequences of former President Carter's ambitious ethanol proposal "would be devastating to both our corn export trade and our livestock and poultry industries."

"Bluntly put, grain is not an economically sound alternative source of motor fuel."

Middle Creek sets wildlife lectures

KLEINFELTERSVILLE — A series of wildlife lectures has been scheduled during the next five months at the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area Visitors Center in Lebanon and Lancaster Counties.

The programs, which will be presented on the first Thursday of each month, begin at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the visitors center.

The schedule of programs follows:

May 7 - Pennsylvania black bear — Gary Alt, Game Commission Wildlife Biologist.

June 4 - Pennsylvania's endangered species program — Mike Puglisi, Game Commission Wildlife Biologist.

July 2 - The Middle Creek story — Charles Strouphar, Manager of the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.

August 6 Wild Turkey in Pennsylvania — Arnold Hayden, Game Commission Wildlife Biologist.

September 3 - Non-game wildlife in Pennsylvania — Jerry Hassinger, Game Commission Wildlife Biologist.

Question-and-answer periods will follow each of the presentations. The programs are open to the public free of charge.

Lebanon schedules forum

LEBANON — The Lebanon County Cooperative Extension Service is sponsoring a public forum on using sewage sludge on farmland.

"Most of Lebanon County's larger municipalities are now in the process of negotiating agreements with farmers to dispose of the sludge on farmland," said Newton Barr, County Agent. "This meeting is designed

to help to answer questions regarding the feasibility, safety, economic value and legal aspects of this type of disposal."

The forum is scheduled for Thursday, April 30 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Lebanon Municipal Building. Speakers will include Penn State's Raymond Shipp, and the Department of Environmental Resources' Francis Fair and Glenn Ayers.



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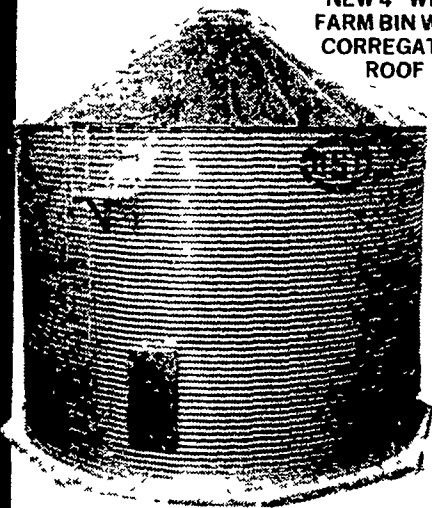
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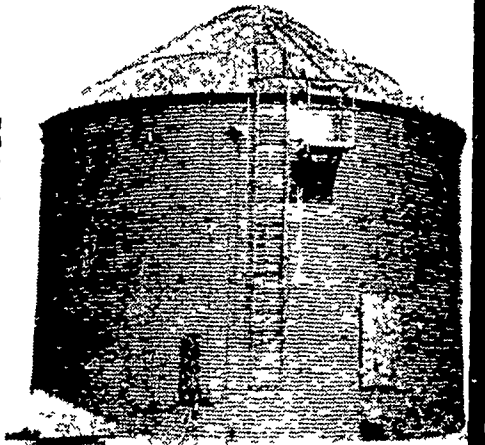
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