

Md. farmer's chickens pay living, trees pay debt

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Chicken farmer Ed Coons of Somerset County, Maryland, raises 170,000 broilers a year. It's a living.

For happiness, he grows trees. "We're not in tree farming for the money," Coons said, speaking for himself and his wife, Suzanne. "In fact, our chickens help pay for the trees. We won't be around by the time these trees are ready to harvest. We just love to work on the land and watch the trees grow."

In Coons' view, he's paying a debt.

"You shouldn't take from the land without putting something back," he said.

That's been Coons' philosophy for the 17 years the family has managed some 1,000 acres of woodland. They used some of the timber to build an addition to their house, which they heat with wood. Then they reforested all of the cutover area, so another timber

crop could start growing.

"We want to leave trees for future owners just like the past owners did for us," said Coons.

An official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture says he'd like to see more private landowners take such a keen interest in planting and caring for trees.

"The Coons are the kind of people the nation is depending on to meet future demands for timber and food," said R. Max Peterson, chief of the USDA's Forest Service. "A recent USDA assessment of the nation's resources shows that timber demand soon will outstrip supply under present management levels."

"Seventy-five percent of the best economic opportunities to increase timber yield is in growing more trees sooner, and most of these opportunities exist on land owned by farmers and other private citizens," Peterson said.

But it is difficult to motivate

private owners to invest in long-term timber management when the pay-off is so far in the future. Two government programs provide an incentive.

These are the forestry incentives program and the agriculture conservation program. Both are cost-sharing programs administered jointly by the USDA's Forest Service and USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. The programs provide financial and technical assistance to non-industrial private landowners for reforestation and timber stand improvement.

"Without these programs, I would have to sell land to get the money to keep planting," said Coons.

"My tree farming began with 700 acres in 1963. I applied for \$500 for planting from the agriculture conservation program through the Maryland Forest Service. At the

time, that was the maximum available in a year."

Today, the forestry incentives program will pay up to 75 percent of the costs of reforestation and timber stand improvement, not to exceed \$10,000 per year per recipient. The agriculture conservation program will pay up to 80 percent, not to exceed \$3,500 per year.

Coon's tree farming efforts paid off with special honors in 1978. He was named Outstanding Tree Farmer in Maryland and then Outstanding Tree Farmer in the Middle Atlantic Area. He credits much of his success to USDA assistance and the technical advice of Maryland state forester Dick Whitney.

"I wouldn't have known where to begin without Dick's help," said Coons.

Since he began in 1964, Coons has planted some 325 acres of cutover woodlands with loblolly pine

seedlings, either by himself or with contracted hand labor. He used chemicals to stop low-quality hardwoods from competing with the pines on 500 acres.

Private contractors bulldozed and shear-bladed grown-over sites on 100 acres. He used controlled burning to get the land ready for planting on 150 acres, and 200 acres have been treated with herbicide to control undesirable underbrush after timber harvest.

This spring, Coons hand-planted another 60 acres with loblolly pine seedlings. He received federal assistance for about 20 of these acres.

Without the federal funds, Coons says, his tree planting efforts would have been greatly constrained.

"Most farmers like myself need to use their available cash for paying living expenses, capital debts and taxes," he said.

Peterson said research results back up Coons' words. Forest Service studies, he said, show that many of the nation's private forest owners lack the capital for making the investments needed for most timber management decisions.

"We know investments in timber management on these private woodlands are important and that they will benefit society by increasing supplies for the future. This will benefit consumers through lower prices and more readily available materials. That's why we have these assistance programs," he said.

Coons said when he eventually sells some of the timber, he puts most of the profits back into growing more trees.



TO SERVE YOU BETTER

From

LANCASTER, PA.



R/K AGRI SERVICE

(Royster/Kirby)

500 Running Pump Rd., Lancaster, Pa. 17601

MIXED FERTILIZER

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS

ROYSTER BONANZA AND CROP SPECIALS

MATERIALS FOR BLENDING OR DIRECT APPLICATION...

- 46% UREA (GRANULAR)
- 33½% AMMONIUM NITRATE
- 30% NITROGEN SOLUTION
- DIAMMONIUM PHOSPHATE
- 46% TRIPLE SUPERPHOSPHATE
- 60% MURIATE OF POTASH
- 22% GRANULAR ZINC
- 32% BORATE (GRANULAR)
- MICRONUTRIENT MIX
- 90% SULFUR (GRANULAR)

THREE LOCATIONS IN PENNA.

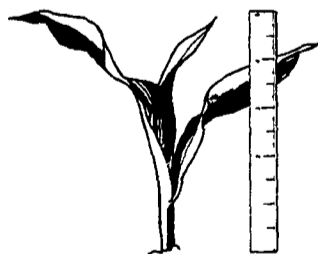
DANVILLE 717-275-4850

RICHLAND 717-866-5701

LANCASTER 717-299-2541

New Banvel herbicide 2-step overlay program...

Now you can lay-by corn BEFORE it's 5 inches high!



Here's how the Banvel early lay-by program works:

- 1 Apply your pre-emergence herbicide to control grasses
- 2 Apply Banvel before corn is more than 5 inches, when broadleaves are germinating before weeds have robbed significant amounts of moisture or nutrients from your crop

Result: Banvel early lay-by controls a broad spectrum of important broadleaf weeds, including the tough ones 2-4-D misses during the time when weed control is most needed

And you probably won't have to go back into the field till harvest!

Call us now about the Banvel herbicide 2-step overlay program from Velsicol



R/K AGRI SERVICE

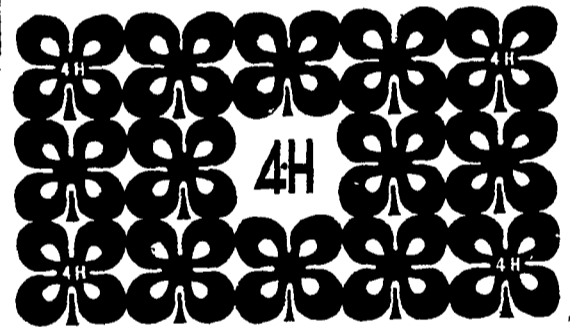
- Large Enough to Serve
- Small Enough to Care

TWO LOCATIONS IN SO. MD.

JAMES H. McKENNY Sales Representative

CHARLOTTE HALL 301-884-4604 301-932-6527

UPPER MARLBORO Rear of Three M Farm Supply 301-627-8700



HYDROPONIC FARMING



Here is your opportunity to own and operate a high profit and enjoyable greenhouse business growing tomatoes, lettuce and cucumbers year round!!

Growers are needed in your area to become owner/operators in this fascinating money making business.

We provide complete training and technical assistance. Investments from \$12,000-\$25,000. Gross annual income \$14,000-\$22,000.

Investigate this opportunity through personal inspection of our **PROVEN SYSTEM** by visiting a greenhouse in full production.

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION CALL OR WRITE:

PHONE 215 — 527-0850

HYGRO PRODUCTION, INC.

EARL CURTIS NICHOLS, PRES.
21 MEADOWS LANE
HAVERFORD, PA 19041



★ **WRITE OR CALL** ★
LANCASTER 717-299-2541
IN PA. 1-800-732-0398
OUTSIDE PA. 1-800-233-3833

