

York conservation tour

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the hilly fields of corn and grain, sloping down to areas that needed tile drainage to eliminate wet spots.

Diversions and grassed waterways were installed to control periodic heavy rains and channel the runoff to where it would no longer erode the topsoils.

For his efforts to preserve the topsoil by fighting back with erosion control techniques, Jack Myers was named the 1981 Cooperator of the Year by the York Conservation District.

Jack and Nancy have tended stands at the local market houses for many years, and their cropping program revolves partly around customer demands. Truck plantings for retail sales include tomatoes, sweet corn, potatoes and cantaloupes. Several hundred capons also are raised annually for dressed poultry market buyers, with the birds finished out in an upper area of the spacious bank-type barn.

Myers also feeds out about 150 steers each year, marketing them through local livestock auctions.

Following luncheon, and a brief program at the Jacobus Fire Hall, the tour then took a look at the county's largest sawmill.

Modern and efficient, the Robert Dubel mill boasts one of the few electrically-driven sawing set-ups around. Specializing in fine hardwoods, the Stewartstown lumber firm sends over five million board feet through the giant saw annually.

Nearly all of the raw materials for feeding the whining blade is bought out of the woodlands of York and neighboring Baltimore

County in Maryland. Dubel says that some of the finest hardwoods in the world grow in the area. Oak and poplar comprise a large portion of the 14-inch-diameter-and-over standing trees harvested for processing.

Although some of the rawcut boards are finished by domestic firms and sold through state wide markets, a large percentage goes for export, especially to Germany and the Netherlands. White oak, used by German firms in the construction of quality furniture, is a favorite of the export buyers.

Lumber moves from the mill blades to a grading area where it is measured, inspected and marketed. Veteran lumber grader Jim Blymire explained grading techniques, and related some of the harsh economic problems created by heavy infestations of the gypsy moth.

According to Blymire, gypsy moth damage caused lumber to become streaked with ray discolorations that cause an inferior finished product. Severely damaged boards are of almost no use, except for shoring up municipal sewerage systems.

To a sawmill operator, the telltale gray streaks left by voracious gypsy moth colonies means a devaluation per board foot from about one dollar to nearer ten cents.

Just a short distance from Dubel's, the conservation group stopped for an update on an ag land enterprise being carefully watched by farmers, environmentalists and waste disposal engineers.

It's the site operated by the York County Solid Waste and Refuse Authority, with 300 acres (200



York soil conservationist Riggs Harwell, left, briefed conservation tour visitors on the erosion and runoff control measures designed for the dairy operation of Shirley and Charles Hess, and their son Brad.

owned and 100 leased) available for the trenching of York's solid wastes.

After topsoil and several feet of upper layer ground are removed from the disposal sites, a 20-foot thickness of solid waste can be

layered in trenches. Up to 360 tons of refuse can be spread and compacted daily by heavy earth-moving machines, with the packed wastes covered at the end of each day with a six-inch layer of soil.

Opened for business in 1974, the

landfill has returned its first disposal sites to crop ground use.

Two and a half feet of subsoil, then three and a half feet of topsoils, went over 18 feet of layered, compacted waste. Planted to rye

(Turn to Page D30)

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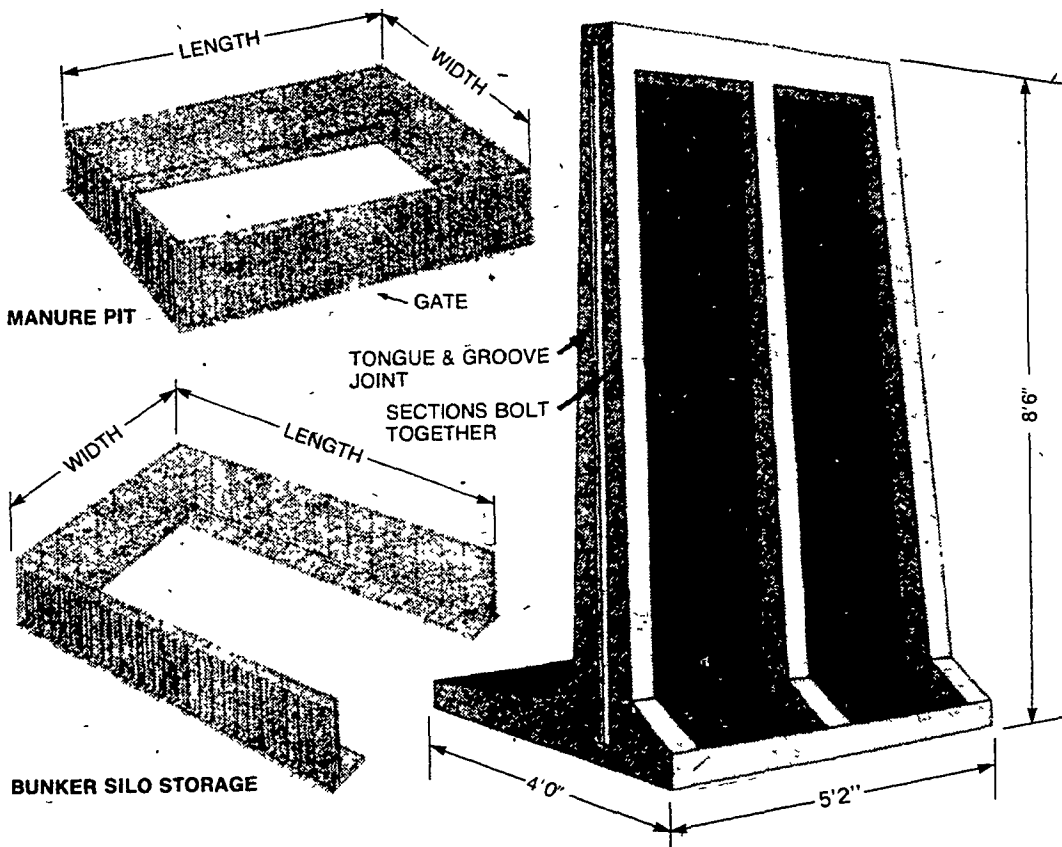
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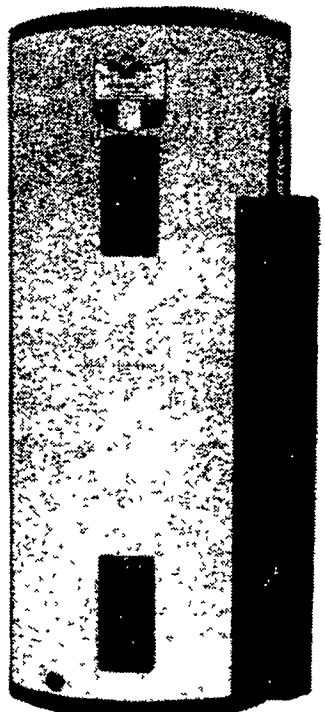
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