

Huntingdon soils info computer coded

UNIVERSITY PARK — Two Penn State scientists say the computer is the best tool for getting information about soils to planners, farmers, engineers, foresters, and anyone else who needs to know if a certain soil fits a specific use.

Bob Cunningham and Gary Petersen have completed a pilot project for Huntingdon County. They computer-coded four kinds of information: field data on local soils, mapped by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service; the soils' physical, chemical, and mineralogical properties, determined at Penn State; SCS interpretations of the soils' suitability for various uses; and the exact location of each soil.

"Suppose you want to know which areas are suitable for septic tank absorption fields," says Petersen. "We can display these sites on a color TV screen linked to the computer. Or maybe you want the depth to bedrock, or the percent of land in steep slopes, or the number of acres suitable for growing corn. We can pull out exactly the information you ask for, and no other. We can make you

a custom map in a matter of minutes."

The scientists stress that only the Huntingdon County data have been coded. Similar information is available for the rest of the state, but it's scattered throughout SCS maps, county soil surveys, and reports of Penn State's soil characterization lab.

Says Cunningham, "To make our system statewide, we would need to code every soil-type location — every 5-, 10-, or 100-acre patch in every hollow, valley, or mountain where an SCS field-worker stuck and auger or a shovel in the soil."

Says Petersen, "Maps on paper become obsolete. Maps in the computer can be up-dated to show building development, changes in land-use patterns, or forest succession."

"In 10 years," adds Cunningham, "every land-use planner and every county extension agent in Pennsylvania could have a microcomputer with a special data package for his or her county. Then, anyone who needed a custom soil map could get one.



Agricultural administrators from the University of Maryland and a representative of the Farm and Land Institute hand-delivered a recognition plaque recently to Mrs. Pauline R. Seidenspinner in her home at College Heights Estates, Prince Georges County. Participating in the informal ceremony were: from left, Billy V. Lessley, professor of agricultural and resource economics; Frank L. Bentz, Jr., vice president for agricultural affairs and legislative

relations; Mrs. Seidenspinner; and Royd R. Smith of Frederick, past president of Maryland FLI chapter 32. Smith presented the plaque to Mrs. Seidenspinner as "a testimonial of sincere appreciation for outstanding service and contribution to the real estate profession." Mrs. Seidenspinner and the FLI chapter are annual contributors to a scholarship for students in agricultural economics at the University of Maryland.

Limousin Foundation sponsors performance symposium

DENVER, Col — In an effort to help breeders optimize beef production, the North American Limousin Foundation is sponsoring "Direction '82," a performance symposium to be held in Wichita, Kan July 29-31.

In addition to the Limousin Breeders Performance Symposium, the 1982 National Junior

Limousin Convention and Heiter Show will be held at the same time. According to Greg Martin, NALF executive vice president, the two events will provide cattlemen with an opportunity to relate performance records with visual appraisal, both important in total beef production.

The four-day symposium will

allow cattlemen to hear beef industry experts address performance testing, linear measurements, breeding values and use of personal computers in record keeping. In addition, breeders will learn how to better market their cattle with performance records and how visual appraisal and performance data

compliment each other. According to Martin, competition in the beef industry will lead all cattlemen to become more performance oriented.

"Commercial cattlemen must have cattle which grow quickly and efficiently yet don't have

reproductive and calving problems," he says. "Direction '82' will bring together the best and most knowledgeable researchers and cattle producers in the United States to help cattlemen plot their breeding program's direction for years to come."

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