

# Potato Day features cameras, computers & fighting Pringle's

**BY DICK ANGLESTEIN**  
**LANDISVILLE** — The latest in potato research, ranging from using cameras and computers to help grow them to the latest in spraying fashions and progress in the fight against Pringle's, was featured at a field day in Lancaster

County that continued from early morning to well after dark on Tuesday.

In addition to the overall emphasis on potatoes, the field day included some preliminary results on trials of double cropping corn and soybeans after barley. In



Lebanon County graduate student Mark Gronceski photographs potato plants as part of research being conducted at Penn State's Southeast Lab at Landisville.



Don Daum, Penn State extension ag engineer, explains rotary nozzle spraying equipment to one of the groups touring the Southeast Research Lab during Potato Field Day on Tuesday.

general, the studies show that raising double crop corn for grain should be forgotten, for silage is a better bet, but soybeans bring the blackest bottom line as far as double cropping is concerned.

The Pennsylvania Potato Field Day was held at three different locations -- Penn State's Southeastern Field Research Lab and the county potato farms of Noah Kreider and Clair Graybill.

At the Southeastern Research Lab, 10 different research projects were outlined to participants. At each of the research plots, Penn State personnel explained the particular study that was being conducted.

In one of these studies, Lebanon County graduate student, Mark Gronceski, had a 35 mm. camera set up on a long tripod seven feet above some potato plants.

"I'm using both infra-red and color film to photograph these potato plants," Gronceski explained.

"This work is being coordinated with the remote sensing aerial infra-red photography which is now being done in York, Lancaster and Lebanon counties by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Plant Industry.

"We'll be comparing these photos taken seven feet off the ground with what is seen from the aircraft so that the aerial photography can be better interpreted."

Gronceski also is using regular color film in the study because it is more economical. The photographic studies can help detect insect damage, measure loss of plant leaf and trace plant damage by analyzing the color shadings in the plants.

While remote sensing of grain

fields has been quite common from aircraft and satellites, this is believed to be the first such research involving potatoes.

The use of mini-computers was demonstrated for many on-farm purposes, including when spraying should be done for two potato problems -- late blight and the green peach aphid.

Art Hussey, of Agronomy Extension, demonstrated the computer systems, which cost about \$2,000 and are now making their appearance in County Extension Offices. In addition to the blight forecast program, they could be utilized for various records keeping and other management purposes, such as involving the purchase or renting of additional land.

In a discussion of sprayer technology, Don Daum, Extension Ag Engineer, reviewed three types of sprayers, which were later demonstrated on the Kreider farm. They included the boom sprayer, the air blast and the new rotary nozzle.

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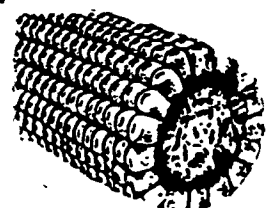
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