



Mother Nature complicates '82 Pa. corn crop

BY DONNA TOMMELLEO
LANCASTER — Governor Dick Thornburgh and Pennsylvania farmers maintain a vigil these days for an answer to Thornburgh's request to USDA for special disaster funds to assist producers in the aftermath of early frost and drought which crippled

the state's corn crop. Sixteen northwest counties sustained heavy frost damage in late August, while at the same time many southeast farms experienced an extremely dry period.

According to John Yocum, senior research associate at Penn

State's southeast research farm in Landisville, Lancaster County received only 1.10 inches of rain in August instead of the normal 5 inches.

"The month of August is critical for corn production," Yocum said. "From silking on you'd love to

have about one inch of rain a week."

On the plus side, the dry weather didn't encourage a surge of leaf diseases, which thrive in moister conditions.

Nevertheless, the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service estimates this year's grain harvest to be six percent below normal. In 1981, an average acre produced 96 bushels while 1982 figures point to 92 bushels an acre.

The heavy rains in parts of southeastern Pa. this spring and early summer (eight inches in June) did account for a spurt of growth early in the season, said Yocum.

In addition, cloudy ceilings produced taller plants. As a result,

corn harvested for silage will produce a slightly better yield.

"We don't know what the TDN will be on those yet," he said.

"But from the time the corn was planted, we've had lower than normal temperatures. We didn't have the heat units so the corn is about one to two weeks late," explained Yocum.

"The more use you can make of a full growing season the better it is for any plant," he added.

For many farmers in northwestern Pa., the growing season ended abruptly on August 29 with a killing frost.

According to Extension agronomist John Baylor, the crop

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Expand soybean markets

Barges benefit So. Jersey

SALEM, N.J. — In an effort to expand their soybean markets via barges, a group of South Jersey farmers has attracted a few non-agriculture industries to their small city, said a Salem County Extension agent.

"The idea of a port opened everybody's eyes," commented

Extension agent David Lee. "The city now has commitments from six large industries."

Lee explained the Salem Redevelopment Authority has hired a consultant to look into the possibility of maintaining a permanent port in the South Jersey city, which is located along the banks of the Delaware River. Current commitments, said Lee, include bids from gravel, sand, container and tugboat firms to name a few.

Before May 1982, soybean producers had a limited amount of markets that were accessible only by road, said Lee. The idea of using barges would avail the farmers to "an abundance of other markets," he added.

However, the concept met with an "abundance" of skepticism from all involved.

"Nobody thought we could do

it," he recalled. So, last May, Lee and the soybean producers organized their first shipment out of the Salem port to "show people it could be done."

The group used an unorthodox style of loading the barge. Farm augers were brought in and moved the beans from tractor trailers into the moored barge.

"We worked around the clock for three days," said Lee. Any skepticism that prevailed was probably washed away as the first soybean-laden barge was successfully launched from the make-shift Salem port in May.

To prove the idea was still viable, Lee organized a second shipment, expected to shove off today. This time, however, several dignitaries, including the Governor and State Agriculture Secretary of New Jersey, are

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Lebanon Holstein breeders honor Gem-Rock founder

BY SHEILA MILLER

MT. ZION — Lebanon County Holstein breeders paid recognition to Elmer H. Dutweiler, the 82-year-old founder of Gem-Rock Holsteins in Lebanon County.

Grandson Kenneth Sellers, who is carrying out the farm operation under the Gem-Rock prefix, accepted the award for Dutweiler presented by Lebanon Holstein president Ken Mase Tuesday evening during the club's annual banquet. Dutweiler was unable to attend since he is recuperating from a lengthy illness. He currently resides at the United Christian Church Home, north of Annville.

In making the presentation to Sellers, Mase said Dutweiler was considered "everybody's grandpa" since the Lebanon County Holstein breeder could always be found at shows and sales "leanin' on a broom or pitchfork — always helping out."

Dutweiler has been Lebanon County Holstein Club's nomination for Pennsylvania Hall of Fame during the two years when the breed's state convention was held in the southeast district, explained Mase. Although he was not selected for the state award, Dutweiler became Lebanon County's first "Hall of Fame" award winner.

Commented Sellers on accepting the award for Dutweiler, "This will

probably bring tears to his eyes when he sees it (plaque)."

The Lebanon Holstein Club also presented an award post-humously to Frank Reist Sr. who died unexpectedly. Accepting the plaque in memory of their father were Reist's three sons.

Junior members who received production awards included:

2 Year Old Milk

1. Daryl Balmer, 17,969 pounds;
2. Jonathan Sonnen, 16,625 pounds;
3. Rebecca Sonnen, 14,919 pounds.

Fat

1. Daryl Balmer, 718; 2. Rebecca Sonnen, 537; 3. Adam Sonnen, 596.

3 Year Old Milk

1. David Lentz, 16,817; 2. David Sonnen, 16,097; 3. Jonathan Sonnen, 15,880.

Fat

1. David Sonnen, 795; 2. Jonathan Sonnen, 626; 3. David Lentz, 575.

4 Year Old Milk

1. Robert Bare, 23,871; 2. Jonathan Sonnen, 20,302.

Fat

1. Robert Bare, 790; 2. Jonathan Sonnen, 714.

5 Years & Over Milk

1. Michael Bare, 20,332; 2. Brenda Lentz, 18,915.

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Lebanon County Holstein breeders honored their choice for Pa. Hall of Fame Tuesday evening — 82-year-old Elmer H. Dutweiler, founder of Gem-Rock Holsteins. Accepting the award from President Ken Mase, left, is Dutweiler's grandson Kenneth Sellers, Karen Sellers, with Ken's parents Verna and Harold Sellers.