

Ag has stake in Del. water policy

NEWARK, Del. — The East Coast, including Delaware, has a long history of abundant water. But competition for water has increased in recent years. Supply in some areas has become uncertain because of frequent drought. In others, pollution has reduced the amount of available water.

As a result, residents of Delaware and other eastern states can expect to see changes in water allocation policies during the next few years, predicts University of Delaware extension economist Gerald Vaughn. A specialist in community and resource economics, he is also vice chair-

man of Governor DuPont's Comprehensive Water Resources Management Committee and a member of its water allocation subcommittee, which is proposing refinements of Delaware's current water management policies.

"Agricultural water users—especially farmers who irrigate—have an important stake in future water use decisions," says Vaughn. "Rights to use water are nearly as vital to Delaware's agricultural industry as rights to use land."

He says irrigation has the greatest potential of any technology for increasing the state's food production capacity in

the 1980s. "Inadequate rainfall at critical periods of plant growth, soils somewhat low in waterholding capacity, and increasing financial pressures make the risk of crop failure or low yields a heavy burden on First State farmers," Vaughn says. To protect yields, each year more cropland is irrigated.

Irrigation also increases yields and improves product quality in times of normal rainfall. For irrigators, double-cropping becomes a common practice. Even triple-cropping is sometimes possible, thus further boosting Delaware's capacity to produce food.

Sprinkler irrigation of corn, using water pumped from on-farm supplies, is the most rapidly growing irrigation practice, both nationally and in Delaware. But, cautions Vaughn, irrigation is expensive and may not be a profitable investment on all farms.

Irrigation systems can be difficult to manage and many farmers have trouble getting optimum results.

"Irrigation hasn't consumed undue amounts of water in Delaware," the economist says. "With few exceptions, it shouldn't in the future. The cost gives irrigators an automatic incentive to be as efficient as possible in their use of water. However, steady increases in irrigation and other water demands to create the potential for conflict among water users."

Last spring public meetings were held in each county to discuss water allocation issues and possible changes in state allocation policies. Vaughn feels more informational meetings and, eventually, public hearings will be needed before the revised proposals become regulations.

He says the Extension service's goal in participating in the state's effort to clarify its water use policies is to help people better understand the water management issues involved and

the likely consequences of alternative policy decisions.

"From previous public meetings it is clear that many Delaware residents, including farmers, are unaware of or don't understand existing Delaware water law as it has evolved from common law concepts to the present administrative permit system," Vaughn says.

He encourages farmers who irrigate, or who may irrigate in the future, to read the Extension circular "Agricultural Irrigation and Delaware Water Law."

"This will help them understand our present water law and put them in a better position to make their views known on proposed changes during public meetings later this year," he says.

Free copies of the 12-page booklet are available at Extension offices in Newark, 302/738-2506; Dover, 302/736-1448; and Georgetown 302/856-5250. Copies may also be obtained by calling Vaughn at 302/738-2511.

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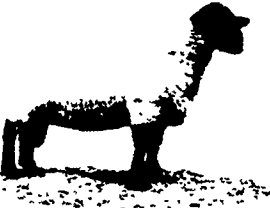
Wood stove program Tuesday

EPHRATA — A program on wood stove installation and safety sponsored Tuesday in the senior high school auditorium by the Ephrata Young Farmers will be open to the public.

Participating in the program will be Chris McGee, of Mutual In-

urance Inspection Bureau and Lester Bowman, of Bowman's Stove Shop, R3 Ephrata. The two will also join in a panel discussion with a representative of the Firemen's Association to answer questions from the audience.

NEW HOLLAND SALES STABLES, INC. - THE ACTION AUCTION

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">MONDAY 8:00 AM</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>FAT  HOGS</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 12pt;">EARLY BIRD HOG SALE</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">10:00 AM</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>HORSES  MULES</p> </div> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">11:00 AM</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p> HAY STRAW GRAIN</p> </div> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">1:30 PM</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p> BEEF SALE CALF, SHEEP, GOATS</p> </div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">WEDNESDAY 12:00 NOON</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>DAIRY  COWS</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 12pt;">HEIFERS, BULLS</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 12pt;">NEW HOLLAND SALES STABLES, Inc.</p> <p style="font-size: 8pt;">12 Miles East of Lancaster on Route 23, New Holland, Penna</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 12pt;">The Action Auction 717-354-4341</p> <p style="font-size: 8pt;">Mgr. - Abe Diffenbach - 717-393-4464 Norman Kolb - 717-397-5538</p> <p style="font-size: 8pt;">Field Representatives Alan Diffenbach 717-656-9806 Luke Eberly 215-267-6608 - 738-1865</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">WEDNESDAY FEEDER PIG SALE 1:30 P.M.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="font-size: 8pt; text-align: center;">We endeavor to keep our barns cleaner than yours. State graded until 12 Noon</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">THURSDAY 11:00 AM</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>BULLS - </p> <hr/> <p>STEERS - </p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 12pt;">BEEF COWS</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">3:30 P.M.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>CALVES </p> <hr/> <p>SHEEP </p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 12pt;">GOATS</p> </div> </div>
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