

Tillage conference to feature planter loan program

LANCASTER — On Tuesday, March 15, the Lancaster Co. Conservation District and the Lancaster Co. Extension Service will co-sponsor the second annual Conservation Tillage Conference at the Farm and Home Center.

To begin at 9 a.m., the program will feature a full schedule of speakers and topics, including: erosion control, fertilizing and liming practices on no-till corn, conservation tillage, insect problems and their control, sprayer calibration and nozzle selection, and the conservation corn planter loan program.

It is this latter program which Tom Johnston, administrator of the County Conservation District, will address.

According to Johnston, the planter is a John Deere, 4-row planter and was used by 35 farmers in 1982, planting 430 acres of corn, and 9 acres of soybeans.

This year, the conservation district will continue the loan program with 2 planters. Johnston reports that a specialist will be hired to transport and assist the farmers with use of the planter, and to advise them on weed and insect control and fertilization.

In 1981, the Lancaster County 5-acre corn contest winner, Ed Harnish, used the planter to double crop corn after his first cutting of hay. He yielded 190 bushels per acre, according to Johnston.

More information on the planter loan program will be given by Johnston at the tillage conference. For more information, on the conference, contact the Conservation District office at 299-1563.



Here, Tom Johnston, administrator of the Lancaster County Conservation District, discusses the planter loan program and contract with Everett Kreider of Quarryville, a conservation district director.



Of the 35 farmers who used the John Deere, 4-row planter in 1982 through the County Conservation District's loan program, eight were Amish. All together, these 35 farmers planted 430 acres of corn and 9 acres of soybeans.

Farmers say 'good income' ranks low among benefits

LANCASTER — Ask farmers to rank the benefits of farming, and anything to do with income may be pretty far down the list.

"The first reason they usually give is that it 'provides a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of doing something worthwhile,'" said Bill Heffernan, University of Missouri-Columbia rural sociologist.

"Next will come something that has to do with 'being your own boss.'"

"In fact, in a survey we completed last summer, the statement 'provides an opportunity to make a good income' ranked seventh out of the eight benefits of farming listed by farm men and women."

But, Heffernan said, the survey results could be a little misleading.

"You've got to have your head above water financially before you get the other benefits of farming," he said.

"In other words, receiving of these benefits depends on the economic survival of the farm. So some financial success has to be important to farmers."

Even so, the rural sociologist figures those who provide educational programs for farmers or otherwise try to influence them have something to learn from this attitude study.

"Many people approach farmers all wrong; they emphasize the economics of why something is

important when they should be emphasizing some of those other values farmers hold dear," Heffernan said.

Those other values or benefits listed by farmers were: "provides a good environment in which to raise children" "provides a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of doing something worthwhile;" "provides a sense of security knowing you always have food and a place to live;" "the work is interesting, stimulating, and provides many opportunities to make decisions;" "provides opportunity to work outdoors and close to nature."

Heffernan said all of these ranked above the benefit farmers have of being their own boss. "Opportunity to make a good in-

come" was below that.

"We had expected to find some difference among different types of farmers," Heffernan said, "but it didn't turn out that way."

"For example, we would have expected cash grain farmers to have a higher profit motive than beef producers who tend to stay in that business even during tough economic times. But separate surveys have both showed each group ranked economics relatively low."

By the way, Heffernan said the tendency for farmers to rank economics down the list "is not exclusive to farming."

"We see the same thing in other occupations — teachers, nurses, and college professors to name a few."

Schuylkill estate planning

SCHUYLKILL HAVEN — An Estate Planning Clinic for farm families will be conducted by the Schuylkill County Extension Service on Wednesday, March 9, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., in the conference center of the Penn State Schuylkill Campus. This session will feature a team of local estate planning professionals and a University specialist.

Topics to be discussed include wills, Pa. intestate law, estate

taxes, property ownership and transfer, and the use of trusts and insurance in estate planning. The meeting is open to everyone, but the major emphasis will be on handling the largest investments in real estate, equipment and livestock which are part of today's modern farming operations.

Advance registration can be made by contacting J. Allan Shoener at the Extension Service office, 385-3431 by March 7.

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