

Carryover seed must meet quality standards

BLOOMINGTON, Pa. — The government's payment-in-kind program, coupled with a hot, dry seed corn production season means that many farmers will receive some carryover seed when

their orders are delivered next spring. But, farmers should not be concerned about planting seed produced prior to 1983.

"Avid PIK participation and

sharp acreage reductions left major seed suppliers with significant carryover inventories," says Wes Wilcox, quality control manager for Funk Seeds International. "Many seed companies, including Funk, reduced their seed production acres in 1983, anticipating a good crop from the acres that were planted."

Then came the summer of 1983, which the National Weather Service called the hottest since the 1930's. The heat and drought stress that plagued many farmers also held down seed production yields.

"Typically, parent seed does not produce ears as large as corn hybrids," Wilcox points out. "Those ears become even smaller under stress. Luckily, carryover seed will buffer what could have been a critical seed supply situation for 1984."

"Federal and state laws require germination tests for all new crop and carryover seed and the per-

cent germination must appear on every bag," he says. To arrive at this figure, several samples are taken from each seed lot and tested.

State statutes also specify a maximum number of months from germination testing and tagging to seed delivery. These range from five to 12 months, with most states stipulating a nine-month limit.

Most states also stipulate a germination percentage minimum. Wilcox points out, however, that most companies' quality standards, including Funk's, are higher than state requirements.

Seed returned from dealers and farmers is tested again for germination before storage. If quality standards are met, seed is rebagged, labeled and readied for shipment the next year. Wilcox adds that storage conditions may affect seed performance in germination tests and in the field after planting.

"Excessive heat and humidity can reduce seed germination," Wilcox notes. "Climate control storage helps maintain germination levels."

"A balance of temperature and humidity is very important to make sure seed is viable when it leaves the warehouse," says John Sumrall, Funk manager of engineering services. "Humidity has a greater effect on germination than does heat. To ensure proper storage conditions, the equipment is controlled electronically and Funk makes frequent manual checks of temperature and relative humidity so the sum of both does not exceed 100."

Wilcox concludes, "The bottomline for farmers is that all seed that reaches their fields, whether carryover or new crop, must meet stringent standards. Hybrid seed quality will not suffer because of PIK carryover or a tough seed production year in 1983."

Tree seedlings available

SPRING GROVE — Landowners are reminded that it is time to plan for tree planting to be done in the Spring of 1984. The Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company, Spring Grove, will share, on a 50-50 basis, the cost of seedlings with interested landowners. Since the inception of the Company program in 1961, more than 17 million seedlings have been furnished to landowners in these south central Pennsylvania counties: Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder and York.

Tree seedlings available this year under the Glatfelter program are Austrian pine, Virginia pine, Japanese larch, white pine, Norway spruce and white spruce. Orders now being accepted will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. All seedlings are furnished by the Pa. Department of Environmental Resources. The Glatfelter Company imposes no restrictions of any kind, but landowners planting these trees must

comply with State regulations regarding these trees. For example, they may not be used for Christmas trees, decorative or ornamental uses for wind-breaks. Minimum order acceptable is for 1,000 seedlings, which will plant 1½ acres. All trees become the property of the landowners who may harvest them at a future date for any wood product.

The Glatfelter program has an overall dollar limitation. Seedling orders will be accepted by the Division on a first-come basis until the Glatfelter program dollar limit has been reached. After that, the entire payment for orders will be the responsibility of the landowners.

If you are a landowner who is planning to plant tree seedlings in 1984, act now! The supply of seedlings for the 1984 season will be limited. For information about placing your order, see your local County Agent, your Bureau of Forestry District office or write directly to The Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company, Spring Grove, PA 17362.

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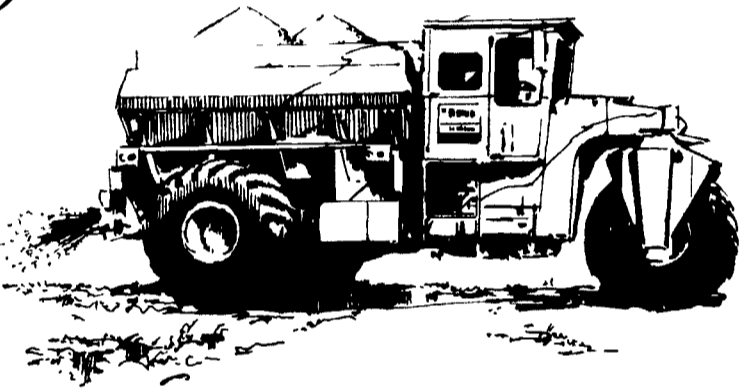
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