

Sludge plans

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volved in the first place is that the mismanagement of the sludge is a real threat. But more than that the sludge is only one part of the overall management scheme of the farm. From a resource conservation perspective, the number one problem facing our farms today is erosion. You're not doing anyone any favors if you are putting the sludge on and allowing the topsoil to wash it away," Voyer said.

The conservation plan would be a tool that would guarantee that the limitations of the soil be addressed. Voyer said that heavy metal is the only limiting factor considered by DER. The problem, in his judgement, is that some soils that have internal drainage problems are also at risk.

Leaving the soil erosion problem out and requiring a waste management plan would be counterproductive. "It is not enough," Voyer said. DER's application stresses good farming techniques but in general the regulations do not have any teeth in relation to sludge.

DER had required conservation plans a few years ago, Voyer said. He said the rule is being reconsidered and SCS is attempting to

provide input. He said in the long run it will be much cheaper to take care of potential problems now, rather than try to fix them later.

Director of the Conservation District Fran Koch said the proposal is one of the long-range goals of the district. She said that while municipal authorities are knowledgeable about handling sludge, they need the help of soil specialists from SCS to properly apply it.

Will DER accept the idea? "There was concern that some townships who had bad experiences with sludge spreading are now toying with the idea of ordinances that would prohibit the spreading of sludge. We think this would be a serious mistake. Sludge is an important resource. If the townships are not satisfied with the permit process of DER, the only way townships are going to help themselves in the future is to prevent problems by enacting an ordinance that would require a local permit and the permit will contain waste spreading plan," Voyer said.

Voyer said the state process could stand improvement. If the improvement does not come in the revisions, Voyer said it would be up to the townships.

Dairy goat meeting slated

DALEVILLE — The Penn State Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with area dairy goat farmers from Northeast Pa. will hold a meeting next Saturday at 1 p.m. at the Daleville Methodist Church on Route 435 in Daleville.

Some of the topics to be discussed are the establishment of a Regional Dairy Goat Association, a series of educational programs on dairy goat management, a dairy goat 4-H project club, and an American Dairy Goat Association sanctioned

goat show. Other general topics that will be discussed will be raw milk license requirements, DHIA production testing, and various other topics. A short slide presentation on basic Dairy goat management practices will be presented by Ann Whitney, area dairy goat producer.

All dairy goat owners are invited to attend. For further information and directions contact the Lackawanna County Cooperative Extension Service at 961-4761.



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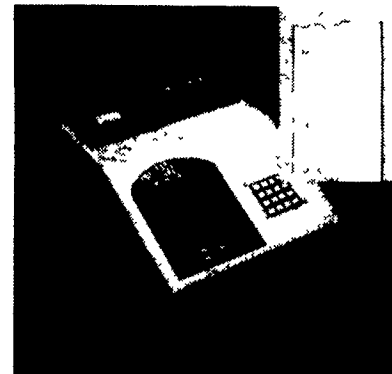
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