

Salisbury Township stresses soil conservation

BY JACK HUBLEY

WHITE HORSE — Despite high winds and driving rain, more than 50 Salisbury Township farmers turned out for a soil conservation meeting at the White Horse Fire Hall on Wednesday night.

Responding to the rising number of complaints registered by residents regarding water, soil and manure run-off on township roads, the supervisors invited conservation experts, to discuss the problem and possible solutions with local farmers.

Featured speakers were County Conservation District Administrator Robert Gregory, Pequea Valley High School vo-ag teacher Clair Witwer, Chairman of the County Commissioners James

Huber, and Clifford Bienko of the Soil Conservation Service.

During opening remarks, Supervisor Les Houck warned that little will remain of the township's topsoil in 25 years if current farming practices are not upgraded.

Clair Witwer pointed out some of the problem areas within the township with the aid of slides taken during the previous week's wet weather. Erosion problems were noted where fields had been plowed to the edges of roads, where intensive grazing had occurred on pasturelands, and where harvested corn fields were exposed to heavy spring rains.

Witwer concluded with measures that some farmers had taken to correct the problems,

such as installing of grass waterways, terracing, and leaving an unplowed margin between crops and roads.

"We must think of our soil as a nonrenewable resource," began Bob Gregory, adding that it takes 300 years to generate one inch of topsoil, and the County is losing four million tons of topsoil annually.

In discussing no-till methods, Gregory stressed that one way of keeping soil on the farm is to keep some type of ground cover on the soil at all times. Gregory showed slides of adjacent corn test plots showing the superior water retention capabilities of no-till soil, and the resulting vigor of no-till corn even during the hot, dry

summer months.

Cliff Bienko, with the Soil Conservation Service, gave a slide presentation reinforcing much of the information presented by Gregory and Witwer. He outlined a number of solutions to the run-off problem including grass waterways and raised pipe terraces.

The session's final guest speaker was Commissioner James Huber who stated that Lancaster County has lost one-half of its topsoil during the last 275 years. He called on farmers to adopt the practices endorsed at the meeting in an effort to stop the flow of precious farmland to the Chesapeake Bay.

In concluding remarks, Supervisor Houck asked those farmers who might be guilty of plowing into rural road right-of-ways to discontinue the practice. He stated that first-offenders would be served with a warning, followed by a fine for subsequent violations. The township's right-of-way extends 16½ feet from the center of the road.

Bob Gregory reminded farmers that the Mason-Dixon Program provides funds on a cost-sharing basis for conservation practices such as terracing, diversions, waterways, no-till planting and strip cropping.

NY farm organizations nominate dairymen for National Dairy Promotion and Research Board

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Representatives of 12 New York State farm organizations met at the Northeast Dairy Cooperative Federation (NEDCO) Office in Syracuse on March 7, to select three candidates for appointment to the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board. The nominees selected, all active dairy farmers, are: Leon Brown, Westtown, N. Y.; David Dodge, Woodville, N.Y.; and John Widger, Ellicottville, N.Y.

The organizations represented at the Syracuse meeting were: Agri-Mark Inc., Agway, Allied Federated Cooperatives, Dairylea Cooperative, Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative, Lehigh Valley Farmers Cooperative, National Farmers Organization, New York State Farm Bureau, New York State Grange, Niagara Milk Cooperative, Northeast Dairy Cooperative Federation, Oneida — Madison Milk Cooperative, and Upstate Milk Cooperatives. With the exception of National Farmer's Organization, who did not wish to make a commitment, all the organizations in attendance agreed to support the three nominees selected.

Leon Brown is a graduate of Rutgers University and a former

vocational agriculture teacher for 25 years, is currently president of the Slate Hill Milk Producers Cooperative, and the Orange County Farm Bureau. He has been a director of NEDCO since 1976, serving as chairman of its education committee. Brown is also a member of the New York State Farm Bureau.

David Dodge is a graduate of Cornell University and taught vocational agriculture for six years. He operates a 150-cow dairy farm in Woodville, Jefferson County. He has served as president of the Jefferson County Farm Bureau, vice-chairman of the Dairy Committee of the New York Farm Bureau and as an Agway Committeeman, to mention a few of his civic activities.

John Widger, who operates a 310-acre dairy farm, is first vice president of the Dairylea Cooperative, president of O-AT-KA Milk Manufacturing Cooperative, director of Upstate Milk Cooperative, director of Milk for Health on the Niagara Frontier

and director of the Dairy Council, Niagara Frontier.

The Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983, provides for the establishment of a National Dairy Promotion Program which will be administered by a 36 member board of dairy farmers nominated from 13 geographical districts, and appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. New York State comprises one district and will have three directors on this National Board.



Robert E. Gregory, Administrator for the Lancaster County Conservation District, tells Salisbury Township farmers that the County's topsoil is disappearing at an alarming rate.

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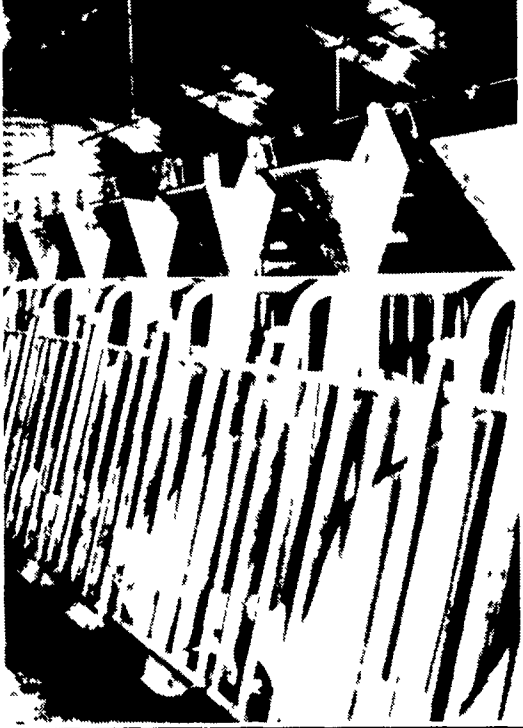
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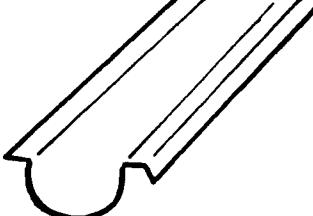


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