

## Forage research center

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barn. They are fed 20 percent fat milk replacer and offered free choice hay, and weaned at eight weeks. From there calves are moved to small free stall areas.

Manure is handled with a Surge solid-liquid separation unit, with the liquid going to an earthen lagoon and the dry matter being used for bedding. Coming through the system at 50-60 percent moisture, the dry matter is then composted to 140 degrees Centigrade to kill organisms.

The dry matter is used to make a manure pack under cows. Venuto said, "It is fairly sterile under cows, but it needs a manager." He said it offers a nice pack which is "good for feet and legs."

Barns at the facility are designed with an edging at the back end of the stall to contain the manure pack. Venuto explained that the top several inches of the pack must be raked and taken off from two to three times weekly. New natural material is added,

covered with chopped straw. The purpose of using the manure pack is to save on the considerable expense of bedding materials.

Venuto admits that the manure pack can cause problems with coliform and mastitis, but feels with good management its use can be successful. The bottom part of their pack has been in place for two years.

In addition to the stall barns, there are two separate free stall barns on the facility, built as one, but separated by a closing partition and operated differently. One is naturally ventilated and the other is insulated and mechanically ventilated. Both have four rows of free stalls and a drive-through feed alley. Venuto says the naturally ventilated one is probably best for most farms, although cows must be fed more in the winter. The cost of the extra feed, however, offsets the extremely high electric bills from the mechanically ventilated system.

The milking parlor is set up as a

**HARRISBURG** — The number of Pennsylvania farm workers totaled 107,000 during the week July 8-14, according to the Pennsylvania Crop and Livestock

Reporting Service. This total includes hired, self-employed and unpaid workers. The number of farm workers decreased nearly five percent from the same comparable survey period of July, 1983. Self-employed workers accounted for 33 percent, hired workers 32 percent, and other unpaid workers 35 percent of the total farm work force.

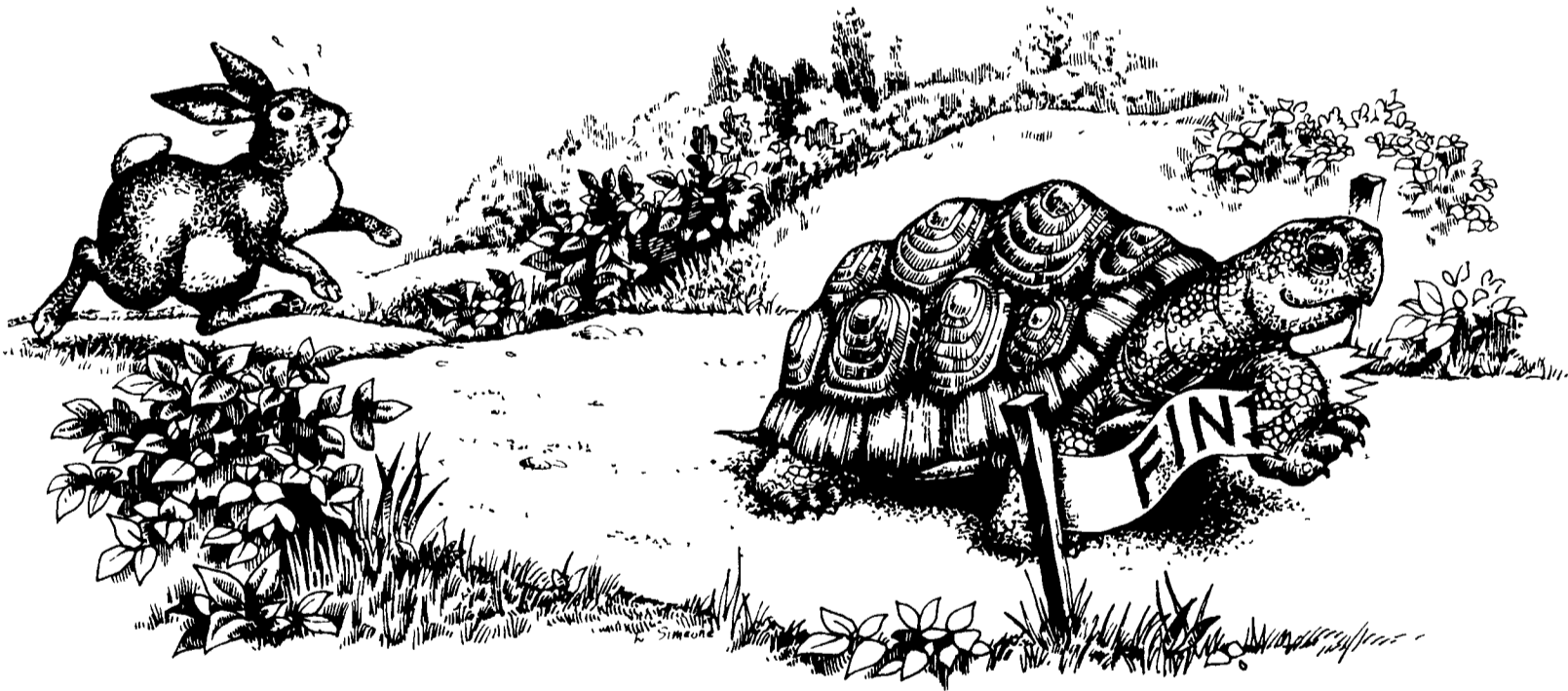
Pennsylvania self-employed farmers worked an average of 57.7 hours during the survey week. Through the same period, unpaid workers averaged 45.9 hours and hired workers averaged 36.3 hours. Hourly farm workers in the commonwealth were paid an average of \$3.90 an hour. Those paid on other terms, such as salary or commission, received an average of \$3.69 per hour. Field workers earned an average of \$3.78 per hour, while those working with livestock were paid an average of \$3.48 per hour.

Nationwide, a total of 4.1 million

people were working on farms and ranches during the survey week. This is an increase of nearly one percent over the number for the corresponding week last year. Hired workers represented 43 percent (1.8 million) of the total work force, while farm operators and other unpaid workers accounted for the remaining 2.3 million workers. Self-employed farm operators averaged slightly fewer hours this year, averaging 48.2 hours for the survey week. Other unpaid workers averaged 40.8 hours and hired workers averaged 36.8 hours worked during the period July 8-14, 1984.

The U.S. average wage rate for all hired farm workers was \$4.16 per hour, up 1.2 percent from July 1983. Workers paid on an hourly basis received \$4.12 per hour, an increase of five cents over July 1983. Wage rates by categories of workers were: field, \$3.93; livestock, \$3.93, and piece rate, \$4.60.

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## Sweet onion developed

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — A new onion called "Sweet Sandwich," unlike other onions, becomes milder in flavor while it is stored at low temperatures.

That report comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Clinton E. Peterson, who adapted the onion specifically for growing in the East. He is a plant breeder for USDA's Agricultural Research Service, based in Madison, Wis.

Commercial, home garden and market tests in 1983 in New York State showed what Peterson called "the new onion's superiority." He said the onion averaged 1,615 bushels an acre, out-producing 15 other varieties in the East's hot and dry growing season last year.

Onion bulbs were "strikingly uniform in shape," he said, and over 90 percent were two to three inches in size. Growing trials were carried out by the Agricultural Experiment Station of Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

When harvested, each bulb was equally mild and improved in flavor while in storage, Peterson said. That's in contrast to the "Sweet Spanish," a salad and sandwich onion grown in the West which can vary in mildness.

"Sweet Sandwich" borrows its taste and good storage traits from several varieties of "Early Yellow Globe," he said. But, the new onion is missing its parents' pungency.

Tests also showed that after four months in storage the bulbs softened slightly, but were free of sprouting, root growth and disease.

Production is expected to increase enough, Peterson said, for packet and catalog seed distributors to meet the needs of home gardeners in 1985.