

Chester holds manure management tour

WEST CHESTER — Forty dairymen, equipment dealers and agency personnel attended a recent manure management tour hosted by Chester County Extension and Soil Conservation District. The tour included visits to four farms, equipment demonstrations and comments by Dan Meyer, waste management and facilities specialist from Penn State.

The tour began by visiting a gravity in, gravity out manure facility at Mason Brothers farm south of Nottingham. Bob Mason, one of the owners, said he liked the system because very little equipment is needed for loading or unloading the system. Manure is pushed into a collection pit at the dairy barn and travels through a 12-inch pipe to the bottom of the pit. Mason commented that the system works well, but frozen manure cannot be pushed into the collection pit since it won't flow through the pipe. Dan Meyer stated that the pipe from the barn to the storage structure should be on a 10% slope for a gravity system to work smoothly. Pumping and agitation equipment provided by Butler and US AgriSystems demonstrated the break-up of the crust and agitation of the manure in the facility.

The second stop on the tour was a picket-dam structure on the farm of Glenn Freese. Here, the participants on the tour saw the operation of a picket-dam storage and a ram pump, which moves the stable manure to the bottom of the storage. Freese explained special precautions necessary for cold weather when using a picket-dam storage. Meyers pointed out that the run-off from a picket-dam system usually contains less than 10% of the nutrients in the manure. Marshall Haws, of the Chester County Soil Conservation District, mentioned that run-off from a storage such as Freeses' should be utilized by crops in a diversion terrace. Indeed, Freese has his run-off directed to a large corn field.

Freese also mentioned that when installing a pipe from a ram pump to a storage area, turns should be avoided or made at angles of 45 degrees or less. Also, Curves should be reinforced by concrete to prevent the joints of the pipe to be pushed apart by the tremendous pressure in the pipe.

A slurrystore system at Paul King's farm near Cochranville was the tour's third stop. King told the group that he chose the slurrystore because it was easier to maintain, no weeds to mow, or banks to maintain. The slurrystore occupies less area than an in-ground storage, an advantage according to King. He admitted however, that his system was the most cost of the facilities visited the day.

Harry Troop's covered above ground manure storage structure was the last stop of the tour. Troop commented that he built this above ground structure because of the high water table in his area. The manure is pumped underground from the barn to the bottom of the storage structure. Dan Meyer stated that this is the preferable way to transfer manure from barn to storage, commenting that to push the manure into the structure

from the top would break the crust every day leading to greater nitrogen losses and an increased fly problem. The group also saw a conventional spreader and a tanker with injection chusels on display at Troop's.

Prior to the tour, Dave Swartz and Keith Zanzinger, Chester County Extension Agents, sampled manure, from each of the facilities visited on the tour, to be tested for

nutrient content. Dan Meyer stated that temperature and wind are the greatest factors in determining how fast the nitrogen will volatilize from surface spread manure. Meyer said, "High temperature and high wind will work together to drive off nitrogen quickly. Manure should be incorporated within 24 hours to retain most of the nitrogen. After 4 days, most of the nitrogen is lost."



Dan Meyer, Penn State ag engineering specialist, discusses manure management tour with Jenny Russel, Chester County Soil Conservation District director.



Dave Swartz, Chester County dairy agent, explains outlet location for liquid from picket dam on Glenn Freese farm.

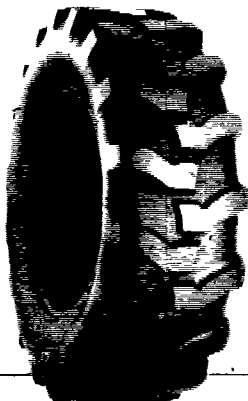


Paul King, on ladder, discusses his slurrystore operation with dairy farmers.

CHECK THESE 1984 FALL FARMERS'



Loader-Dozer

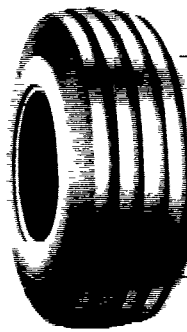


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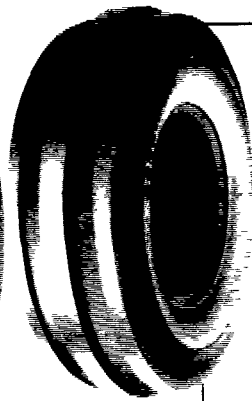


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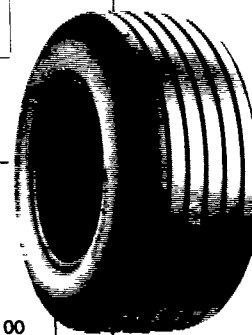
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