

Lancaster Farming

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Four Sections

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\$7.50 per Year

1500 attend Vegetable, Horticulture Conference



Recipients of the State tomato Production Awards were, (standing, from left) Donald E. Mowrer, Lancaster Co.; ~~Don Shetler~~, Montour Co.; Robert Schwartz, Dauphin Co.; Carl M. Schmidt, Northumberland Co.; (seated) Earl and Mark Stern, Clinton Co.; and Dwight and John Hess, Lancaster Co.

BY JACK HUBLEY

HERSHEY — He may be putting the cart before the horse, but David Seem of Kutztown says that the best way to insure a bumper crop of plump, red tomatoes is to cut the stalks on Monday...then come back on Friday and harvest your crop.

The actual days of the week are unimportant, of course, but Seem explained that killing the stalk two to five days previous to harvesting the fruit has increased the harvest of salable red tomatoes by as much as 20 percent during tests run in Illinois.

These observations were part of Seem's discussion on windrowing tomatoes, presented during the Pa. Vegetable Growers Conference held Tuesday through Thursday this week.

Held at the Hershey Convention Center, the three-day event featured back-to-back discussions on the latest in fruit and vegetable technology.

And displaying their wares at the 140 booths sprawled throughout the Convention Center were representatives of 109 companies, the largest industry turnout in the convention's history.

In his discussion on windrowing tomatoes, Seem pointed out that using a windrower permits the use

of 30 to 40-inch rows. He noted that that cutting the stalks previous to harvest produces the same ripening effect as cutting off the irrigation in arid tomato growing regions such as California. For the skeptics in the audience, Seem advised cutting the stalks on a small test plot this year to observe the resulting color change.

The subject of produce marketing was addressed by marketing consultant Ransom Blakeley of Dryden, New York, who analyzed successful direct marketing operations across the country.

Blakeley outlined both the advantages and disadvantages of direct marketing. In the "plus" category were higher, more stable prices for commodities, instant cash flow, direct feedback from customers, a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment and the opportunity to help the public understand farming.

Some of the problems and challenges faced by the direct marketer include:

- Lower marketing potential. Most customers coming to market will live within five to 10 miles away.

- Dealing with large numbers of customers. While one phone call

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Dairy Board plots promotion

HARRISBURG — Members of the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Advisory Board braved the winter weather on Thursday to take action on several promotional programs. Rounding out their first

six months of operation at the end of February, the board made plans to continue along similar paths in the next six months.

Citing the need to achieve continuity in its dairy promotion

efforts and expressing satisfaction with the firm's work, the board voted to retain the HBM/Creamer advertising firm for the upcoming six months.

During the meeting Creamer representative Stan Muschweck revealed five new "Make It Milk" radio scripts that will be aired during February.

To continue sharing milk promotion monies with local organizations, the dairy board also announced that any groups interested in applying for matching funds from the Pennsylvania

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Latest AI info inside

Turn inside to pages D13-D17 for the January 1985 USDA-DHIA Active AI Sire Summary. The sire summary contains Predicted Differences for both yield and percentage for all three milk components — fat, protein, and solids-not-fat.

And accompanying the latest

genetic dairy information are the results of a Lancaster Farming interview with three leaders of the AI industry. On page A22, read about the basic sire selection criteria used by ABS, Atlantic, and Sire Power, in their efforts to make the best possible genetics available to dairymen.

Cures discussed for ailing Chesapeake

BY JACK HUBLEY

LANCASTER — Farmers and city folks, state legislators and environmentalists were all part of a diverse audience that attended the Chesapeake Bay Conference at Millersville University last Saturday.

Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation, along with industry, agriculture and citizens groups, the meeting attracted more than 900 concerned citizens who heard speakers lecture on the pollution problems plaguing the nation's largest estuary.

The conference examined Pennsylvania's role in the degradation of the Bay through nutrients, toxins and sediment deposited from the Susquehanna River.

Draining the state's richest and most intensively farmed agricultural area, the Susquehanna accounts for 50 percent of all of the fresh water entering the Chesapeake. And taking a free ride on the river's

back is the nitrogen and phosphorus-rich runoff and ground water from the area's over-fertilized cropland.

Upon entering the Bay, these nutrients trigger a tremendous bloom of algae that prevents light from reaching aquatic vegetation. The algae also depletes the Bay's oxygen supply as it dies and decomposes, rendering large areas incapable of supporting fishlife.

Sediment is also a problem, blocking light and smothering bottom-dwelling animals and plants.

Though the so-called "point source" polluters, such as sewage treatment plants and toxic industrial and urban runoff, have contributed heavily to the decline of the Bay, the non-point sources, or agricultural lands, are generally considered to pose the greatest pollution problems.

Morning presentations focused on four areas of concern: George Wolff, past president of the the

Conservation District Directors Association, dealt with agricultural issues, and Barbara Taylor, president of Maryland Save Our Streams, focused on urban sources of pollution. Jerry Prout of FMC Corporation discussed point source pollution, and Fish Commission executive director Ralph Abele looked at the current state of Bay fisheries. Afternoon sessions were devoted to concurrent panel discussions on these topics with the above speakers serving as moderators.

Wolff noted that a recently published Bay study completed by EPA does cast the state's agriculture in a bad light. He pointed out that the study found farmers to be losing \$50-worth of phosphorus per acre annually due to erosion.

But the nitrogen problem creates a Catch-22 situation, noted the speaker. Although good soil conservation practices will hold

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Peach growers address marketing problems

HERSHEY — Growers wondering if 1984's anemic peach market may be back again this year, attended a peach marketing panel discussion on Tuesday, during the first day of the State Horticultural Association's 126th annual meeting at the Hershey Convention Center.

Held in conjunction with the

Maryland and New Jersey Horticultural Societies, the meeting addressed a wide array of subject matter pertaining to growing and marketing fruits, as well as disease control.

Moderating Tuesday's marketing panel was National Peach Council director Lilly

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George Wolff, past president of the Conservation District Directors Association, served as moderator for a panel discussion on agriculture's role in the Chesapeake Bay cleanup.