

## Corn finds home in soft drink, diaper industries

**HARRISBURG** — With the state's corn supply continuing to outstrip demand, new and diverse uses for this top feed grain bode well for the crop's future.

"We're looking for another good year for corn," according to Bob Mitchel, District Manager of Grain Systems Inc. "Yields were high, costs were low and bins were full of corn in 1985. Cheaper corn isn't always a good factor though...more cattle and hogs go on feed, over supplying the market, bringing livestock prices down," Mitchel added.

Pennsylvania ranks fourth in the nation in production of fresh sweet corn and corn for silage, coming in at 11th for corn for grain. Total value of production is \$634.7 million dollars, making corn production one of the most valuable crops in the state.

So what alternatives are the corn growers investigating with another bumper crop anticipated for 1986 and even lower prices predicted? Pop, diapers, and fuel may be the answer.

"Fructose and ethanol are the future of the corn industry", states Walter C. Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the Pennsylvania Corn Growers Association and director of the National Corn Growers Association. "Presently three million bushels of corn are used to produce fructose for use in soda as sweeteners."

Weis Markets is one of the first Pennsylvania firms to introduce corn sweeteners as a sugar substitute," Johnson said proudly. "Instead of using a synthetic sweetener, the fructose, or corn sweetener, has the same calories as sugar but is twice as sweet.

Because you only use half as much, you also cut the carbohydrate intake in half." Johnson added.

On a personal note, Johnson, a diabetic, has used only corn fructose as a sweetener for the past four years. "USDA has not yet released corn fructose as a dietary product for diabetics, but they are working very hard on it," Johnson said.

Presently 500 million bushels of corn are used for the production of

ethanol, an alternative fuel source derived from corn. Johnson predicts that by 1990 one billion bushels of corn will be utilized in the production of fructose and ethanol.

But where do diapers fit in? The United States Department of Agriculture has coined it "Super Duper," a corn starch, developed in the mid-west, which is 2000 times more absorbant than

anything else on the market. The Super Duper corn starch is incorporated into many of the super absorbant disposable diapers, adding convenience for millions of consumers...unknowingly.

Many avenues are being searched, researched and expounded upon across the country. Pop, diapers and corn are just a few examples of the exciting new technology available to agriculture.

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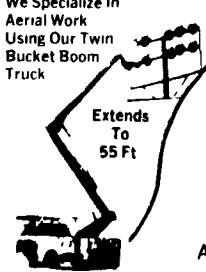
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