

Lebanon Manure Program To Spread Nutrient 'Wealth'

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Conservation District manager, Doug Goodlander. In areas where manure production is high, fields tend to get an overdose, while in areas where little manure is produced farmers may not have the equipment to haul the manure and spread it, or the money to have someone else do it.

According to 1983 statistics, says Goodlander, Lebanon County is producing just about the right amount of manure for its crop acres, but the manure isn't getting to all the places it's needed.

With the help of a financial boost from the Chesapeake Bay Program, the conservation district directed the construction of a truck-mounted spreader to help remedy the problem. The project was a team effort involving Evergreen Tractor Company of Lebanon and Osterlund Truck Services of Harrisburg.

The unit employs a John Deere Hydro-Push spreader capable of distributing any type of solid

manure. A radar sensor links ground speed to the spreading rate so that nutrients are dispersed evenly regardless of variations in the truck's speed.

Mounting the unit on a truck made it versatile, says Goodlander, pointing out that the truck can move quickly from farm to farm wherever it's needed.

Goodlander said the district is compiling a list of those who want to sell manure. "We have people desperately looking to sell this stuff," he said. The district intends to coordinate the county's manure management, linking those who have an excess to those who need more. If the manure is purchased, the new truck will be used to spread it free of charge. According to Goodlander, the service will be available to neighboring counties where travel time doesn't become prohibitive. Those interested in finding out more about the free spreading service should call Goodlander at the conservation district office, 272-3377.

Before manure is applied to any field, though, farmers need to be aware of its nutrient levels, said Russ Wagner of the Department of Environmental Resources' Bureau of Soil and Water Conservation. "I would encourage all farmers to get a manure test done," said Wagner, cautioning farmers against relying on "book" nutrient values on their particular farm. "Yours can be tremendously different than the average," he said.

To illustrate his point, Wagner noted that in tests done in Lancaster County, the range of nitrogen content in a ton of manure went from a low of .88 pounds per ton to 11.42 pounds per ton, for an

average of 1.35.

Wagner stressed that manure testing should be repeated if manure handling methods or feed content are changed.

Wagner came to the field day to introduce the Mobile Nutrient Lab to Lebanon-area farmers. A joint project of DER and Penn State University, the lab conducts on-farm soil, water and manure tests, and can develop a computerized nutrient management program for a given farm when the above data, along with crop information, is provided. Turn-around time for the test results is 24 hours.

The mobile lab's mission is to encourage manure analysis and

soil testing, said Wagner. The lab is available to all farmers within the Susquehanna River basin, and farmers interested in having the lab visit their area should contact their local conservation district office.

Farmers attending the field day also had the opportunity to view manure management research being conducted on the Hoover farm by the conservation district and the county extension service. Test plots of corn were planted employing various tillage and nutrient treatments.

Field day visitors also had the opportunity to tour the Hoover dairy and beef operations.

EPA Suspends Use Of Pesticide

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is warning farmers to immediately discontinue using dinoseb because exposure to the pesticide may pose serious health risks.

The warning follows action by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to halt all sales, use and distribution of dinoseb through an emergency suspension order.

EPA issued the emergency suspension, the strongest action it can take by law, because studies show dinoseb causes birth defects and sterility in laboratory animals.

Exposure by skin absorption or inhalation during and immediately after field application of the pesticide is the source of greatest risk to those applying it, according to the agency.

EPA also has a limited amount of evidence that exposure, in addition to causing adverse reproductive effects, may harm the immune system and damage eyes.

Dinoseb is primarily a contact herbicide used to control broadleaf weeds. It is not registered for homeowner use.

The common trade names for dinoseb are: DNBP, DNOSBP,

"dinitro," dinoseb (F-ISO), Caldon, Sinox, Vertac General and Selective Weed Killer, Basante, Chemox General and PE, Chemsect, Dinitrix, Dinitro-3, Dinitro General, Drexel Dynamite 3, Dynamite, Elgetol 318, Gebutox, Hel-Fire, Kiloseb, Netropon C, Subitex, Unicrop DNBP, Vertac

Dinitro Weed Killer 5, Dynanap, Premerge Plus with Dinitro and Klean Krop.

Additional information can be obtained from the Department's Bureau of Plant Industry at 717-787-4843 or through a County Extension Office.

Crop Residue Saves Soil

Crop residue is more than dead plant material which some farmers call trash. It is the key ingredient of a conservation tillage program, says John Akers, district conservationist with the Chambersburg office of the USDA Soil Conservation Service.

Crop residue has saved millions of tons of topsoil on the nation's farmlands. The dead plant materials protect the soil from the impact of the rain drop and holds the soil in place so it will not run off.

Agronomists state that each bushel of corn results in 56 pounds of residue. With a 100-bushel-per-acre corn crop, there is 5600

pounds of residue produced per acre. If this residue is distributed over the field surface and remains until after the next year's corn crop is planted, soil erosion can be reduced up to 90 percent.

Although crop residue is effective in reducing surface erosion, there may still be a problem in managing surface water runoff, states Akers. On shorter slopes of 300 feet and a 6 percent slope, contour strip-cropping is usually effective in controlling surface water. When slopes are larger and steeper, then diversions and terraces may be needed to reduce surface water runoff.

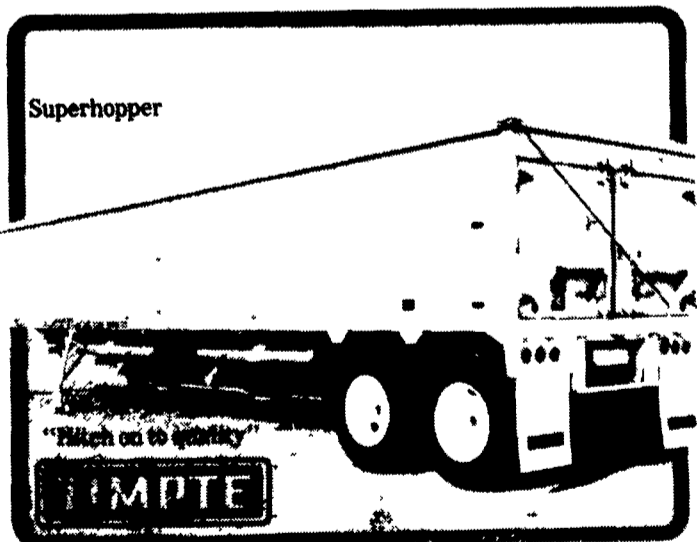
NATIONAL DAIRY COW SALE INDEX

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This sale index can help dairymen place a value on the dairy cows in their own herds. Breed organization sales and private dispersal sales reported in Lancaster Farming are included in the dollar averages.

	Ayrshire	Brown Swiss	Guernsey	Jersey
Year to date:				
Nation	891	978	1131	910
Pennsylvania	832	950	569	1040
Four previous weeks:				
Nation	967	1065	1506	1188
Four previous weeks +/- year to date:	76 higher	87 higher	375 higher	278 higher
	Holstein	Red and White	Milking Shorthorn	
Year to date:				
Nation	2010	1825	850	
Pennsylvania	1388	2837	922	
Four previous weeks:				
Nation	2160	1539	1212	
Four previous weeks +/- year to date:	150 higher	286 lower	362 higher	

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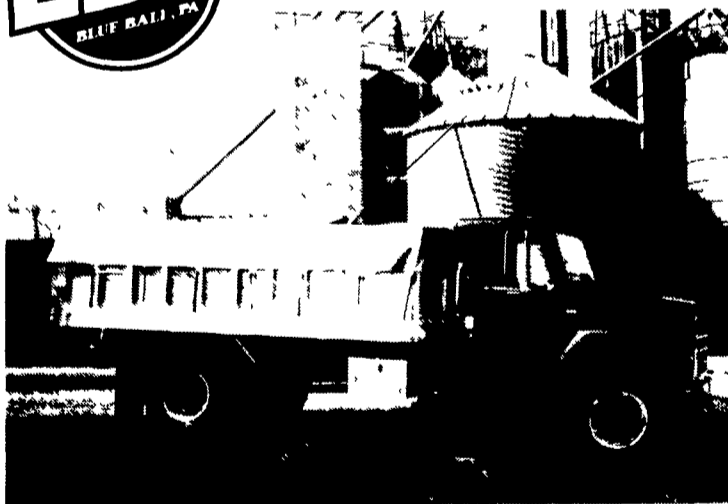
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Protect Soils

This Winter

"Don't get caught with bare soil in your corn fields this winter," states Stanley E. Palmer, Soil Conservation Technician with the Chambersburg office of the USDA Soil Conservation Service.

Bare or unprotected soil will erode or wash off the fields and fill up road ditches and nearby stream channels during the fall and winter rain storms. During the erosion process, organic matter, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides also run into the stream channels. These are a dollar loss to the farmer as well as a dollar cost to the public who have to pay to clean up the water in the Chesapeake Bay.

Farmers can protect their bare corn fields by planting a cover crop this fall, states Palmer. Annual ryegrass at 20 pounds per acre, winter wheat to 120 pounds per acre, or winter rye at 112 pounds per acre are the most common grasses planted for winter cover crop on the bare corn fields.