

Maryland Extension Started 75 Years Ago

Exactly 75 years ago this fall, an educational system began to take shape in Maryland that would help to revolutionize the state's agricultural economy.

With special funding in 1911 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, five demonstration agents were appointed to serve farmers in the five southern Maryland counties. One of the appointments was effective Oct. 1. The other agents began work on Nov. 1. All are now deceased.

These agents were part of a pilot study testing the value of an idea which became the Cooperative Extension Service upon passage by Congress of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914.

Their early duties included demonstrations on spraying and pruning fruit trees. They also attempted to educate crop farmers on the merits of soil testing as a basis for applying lime and fer-

tilizer to increase yields. And they worked with dairy farmers on production-testing programs for their herds.

The first educational work to benefit rural women and girls also was begun at this time, according to a report written in 1924 by the late Thomas B. Symons, first director of the University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Service.

Augustus Stabler was the first agent appointed under the special USDA program in 1911. Dr. Stabler, a physician by training, began work on Oct. 1 that year as a district agent, supervising activities of the others who were given assignments as demonstration agents in individual counties or areas.

His son, Sidney S. Stabler, joined the ranks of that first group of Maryland County agents on Nov. 1, 1911. The younger Stabler served

Prince Georges County and the western half of Charles County.

Other agents starting work on that November day 75 years ago were:

John H. Drury, serving Calvert and Anne Arundel counties; G. Frank Wathen, St. Marys County; and Wilbur Dorsey, service area unknown.

Dorsey spent only three months on the job, while Sidney Stabler stayed on for two years. He spent the rest of his life in the Brighton area of Montgomery County.

When the Cooperative Extension Service began operation from the University of Maryland campus at College Park in 1914, the elder Stabler was promoted to the title of state agent. But he resigned in December that year.

The other agents, Drury and Wathen, made a successful transition into the new organizational structure.

In 1913, Drury was named to serve only Calvert County. He continued in this position through 1923. Wathen served in St. Marys County until 1934.

Apparently, most of those pioneer Extension agents put down roots in the areas where they served. A check of local telephone directories indicates that their

surnames are well-known family names in those localities.

One slight exception is the Stablers, who returned to their ancestral home in upper Montgomery County.

Augustus Stabler was the son of Henry Stabler, a prominent horticulturist, who operated a nursery business in Fairfax, Va., and a sweet corn cannery at Brighton, Md. — below the present-day Triadelphia reservoir, which separates Montgomery and Howard counties.

Henry Stabler is credited with developing both a sweet corn cultivar and a black walnut variety which were named in his honor. Only the Stabler black walnut remains in existence, although few nurseries now carry it in their mail-order catalogs.

The original Stabler black walnut tree was still standing near Brighton as recently as 1940. But its ultimate fate is unknown. Like most black walnut trees, its valuable lumber probably kept it from reaching a ripe old age.

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Hunting Dogs Should Have License, Rabies Inoculation

HARRISBURG — The state Department of Agriculture reminds Pennsylvania sportsmen that it is in their best interest to license hunting dogs in preparation for the coming hunting season.

"Lost animal reports increase during hunting season, and a license is an inexpensive, reliable means by which a dog can be recovered," noted Don Moul, director of the Department's Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement.

The owner of a properly tagged dog can be contacted through the county in which the license was issued.

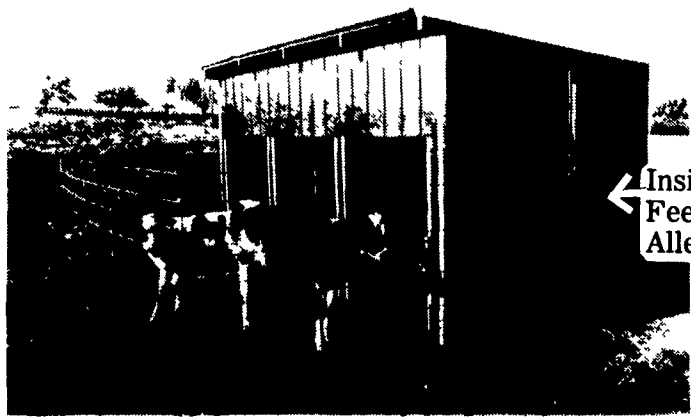
The owner is also protected from a costly fine for failure to license. All dogs six months or older must be licensed under state law, and violations can result in fines of up

to \$300. Noting the increased number of rabid wild animals, Moul also strongly recommends that sportsmen have their dogs inoculated against rabies.

He advised sportsmen who come across a stray dog in the field to approach the animal cautiously to determine if it is wearing tags. If it is licensed, the appropriate county treasurer's office should be notified as soon as possible.

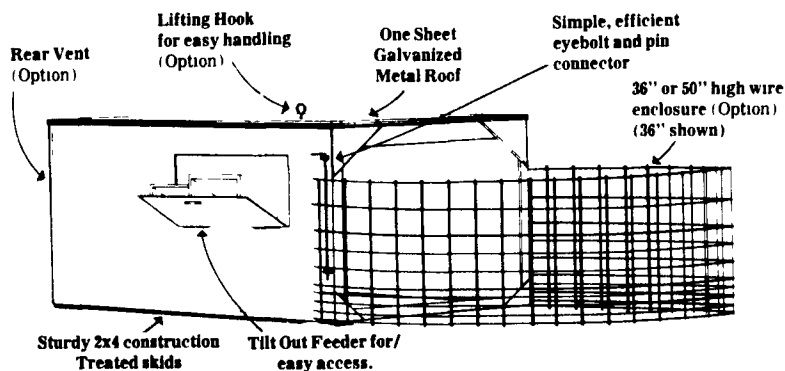
License fees are \$3 for spayed or neutered dogs, \$5 for others. For persons 65 and older who present proof of age, the fee is \$1.75 for spayed and neutered animals and \$2.75 for others. Licenses can be purchased at any county treasurer's office or through an authorized agent.

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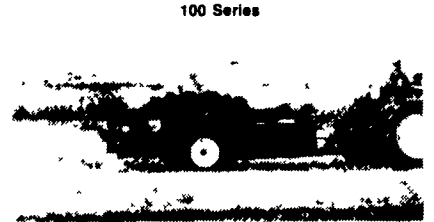
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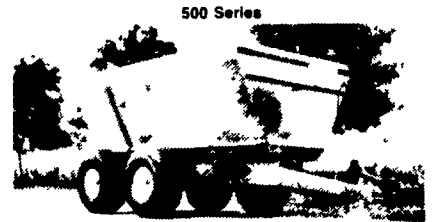
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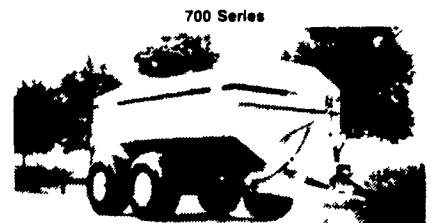
b. Semi-Solid

The Gehl 500 Series gets semi solid manure onto your fields fast and economically. Loading is easy from barn cleaner or bucket with the efficient open top design. An internal chopper type auger blends manure and forces it to the oversized heavy duty rear fan for wide even discharge patterns. Engineered to handle high volumes it can spread up to 1500 gallons of semi solid manure in 2.5 minutes with uniform patterns up to 50 feet.



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