

USDA Commends Statisticians For Pesticide Survey

HARRISBURG — Three statisticians associated with the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service have been cited by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for their contribution to a program to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

Commended by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service were Peter J. Truckor, deputy state statistician; and Jeffrey T. Bailey and Herbert D. Trice, agricultural statisticians.

All three are attached to PASS, a federal-state agency which implements the National Agricultural Statistics Service program in Pennsylvania and carries out many regular and special projects in association with the state Department of Agriculture.

The three conducted a detailed survey of pesticide use in three Susquehanna River watersheds

located in Pennsylvania, then summarized their findings for the Chesapeake Bay Non-Point Source Pollution Abatement Program.

Included in the 1985 study were the Conewago (West) Creek Watershed in York and Adams counties, the Elk Creek Watershed in Chester County, and the Pequea Creek Watershed in Lancaster County. They are among several areas assigned a high priority in the regional effort to stem bay pollution.

The survey results will serve as the basis for a program to educate applicators and farmers on the proper handling and use of pesticides and the impact of those materials on the Chesapeake Bay.

Truckor, a 22-year USDA employee, was the overall supervisor of the survey project. Trice directed the data processing for the study, while Bailey was involved

in the design of the questionnaire and the training and supervision of the interviewers who collected the data.

In all, 672 pesticide applicators and farmers, or 96 percent of those contacted, completed the questionnaire.

W.C. Evans, chief statistician for PASS, said his office has received inquiries from his counterparts in other states requesting information on how the survey was developed and conducted. They plan to apply that information in considering similar studies in their own states, he said.

PASS, located at state Agriculture Department headquarters in Harrisburg, was known as the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service until last year, when the state and national units switched to their current names.

Master Gardeners

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in two days.

Transplanting the vegetable and flower seedlings grown by the clients took two major sessions in late April and early May. Generally each older gardener was accompanied by a staff member. If the day was hot, the day care clients were not kept out more than 10 minutes.

"A lot of our men who don't like arts and crafts enjoy gardening," says Schneck. Social interaction also improves with gardening projects, she adds. "One woman had refused to participate in any of our other activities, but she was willing to go outside and plant zinnias."

In addition to flowers, the older gardeners put in tomatoes, peppers, egg plants, zucchini, cabbage and radishes. "I swore the radishes would never come up; but everyone persisted, and we have a row of radishes today," says Swoboda.

Mums rooted in May will be planted in the courtyard in June and spring bulbs will go into the ground in the fall.

Weeding and watering will become the responsibility of those day care clients who are able. "But we will still be there behind the scenes to take care of things and spray for bugs," Swoboda says.

So far the master gardeners have not had to adapt any gardening tools for weak grips or limited dexterity, but Schneck says the center may have to get special long-handled tools to prevent back strain. "We have at least one enthusiastic gardener who is doing a lot of bending over."

"One of the nicest aspects of gardening therapy is that our clients can see something start and follow it to the end," Schneck says. "If, on the other hand, their memory is failing, at least they can enjoy the moment."

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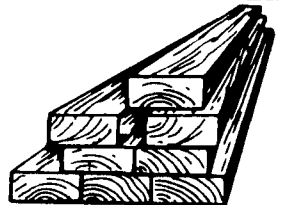
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