

Adams Forage And Soils Day

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crop for haylage, he mows 25 acres in three hours and then chops it the same day.

In summary, Mummert recommended, "If you have the right kinds of soil and you take care of your soil nutrients, you can do alot with alfalfa. You have to select the variety that is right for your soil conditions and meets your disease resistance requirements. There are more good varieties available today than ever before."

John Hess also has a 350 head dairy operation but farms wetter ground than Mummert, Hess finds grasses and mixed hays meet his soil conditions. Hess produces no straight alfalfa, but rather has 250 acres of alfalfa-grass mixes and 50 acres of straight orchard grass.

Hess stated, "Mixed hays give me a wider window for harvest and don't require the extensive management that alfalfa does. In my wetter ground, grasses survive longer than alfalfa and they take the manure better."

Hess admitted that the grass mixes don't bring the top hay market price. However, his six-week harvest interval allows more time for his custom farming business, which includes the sale of sil-

age, haylage, and baled hay. Hess harvests three to five tons from three to four cutting on most of his grass seedings.

Larry Wilkinson also has a large dairy operation, but when two of his sons joined the operation, the family decided to diversify. Originally a Chester County native, Wilkinson had a number of contacts in the mushroom industry who would contract for mulch hay. Utilizing those contacts, Wilkinson now has yearly contracts with a number of mushroom growers.

Wilkinson bales all his hay into Hesston 4x4x8 bales and moves it six weeks or later after harvest. Explained Wilkinson, "To make the hay business profitable in the mulch industry, you must move large volumes of hay."

He related that most farmers have the wrong assumption about what the mulch buyer will accept. He stated, "What some people think of as mulch is anything you can get into a bale. Mushroom growers work on an end product production quota and they know what kind of hay will produce that number of mushrooms. The hay for mulch most have a certain level of protein and have some quality. They won't take fine grass, mea-

dow grass, or old grass. These have no hollow stem to take up the moisture. If it won't grow enough mushrooms they'll refuse the load."

John Myers addressed the other end of the spectrum of market, premium hay sales. Myers also operates a dairy farm, but is also the proprietor of J.D. Myers, Ptrs. a hay dealership which last year marketed 2500 tons of premium hay, almost exclusively to the horse industry.

Myers stressed that premium hay can be valued on cosmetics, color, leaf content, bales size, or on nutritional value. He stressed that these two markets are not mutually exclusive, and the best hay will capture the best of both these markets.

Myers defined a premium market as one that is above the average hay price year in and year out and cautioned the audience concerning unusually high spikes in the market. He said that premium hay must be weed free and cannot be musty. Hay bales should weigh from 45-60 pounds and be baled with twine that does not easily tear.

He concluded, "A premium market is often determined by your proximity to a horse market. Your

best market is a consistant one. The premium market demands quality year after year and also year round. That's what you should strive for in your production. Its a service industry and you must respect that and give it your best."

Culminating the program was the recognition of county participants in state 5-Acre Alfalfa Growers

Club. Dr. Sid Bosworth congratulated Larry Mummert and John Myers for their production. Mummert on a new seeding harvested 5 tons to the acre in three cuttings. It yields 5678 tons of digestible nutrients. John Myers two-year-old stand yielded 5.14 tons to the acre in four cuttings. His yield was 5983 tons of digestible nutrients.

Manage Agricultural Risks Workshop

LANCASTER — Farming is a high risk venture, and it is no surprise that risk management has become a high priority concern of many successful farmers.

In 1988 there are new concerns about prices, crop insurance, hedging, environment and credit. To help people in all facets of agriculture to learn more about these risks and how to minimize their impact on the farm business and farm family, Penn State in cooperation with other state agencies and county Extension agents has set up three Risk Management Workshops throughout the state. One will be in Lancaster.

The Lancaster workshop will be held Wednesday, March 9 at the

Lancaster Farm and Home Center, starting at 9:00 a.m. and concluding at 3:00 p.m. For reservations, call the Lancaster Extension Office, (717)394-6851.

Topics for the day include: 1988 Agricultural Outlook by H. Louis Moore of Penn State, Futures Market Risks by Bob Schlichter of Dean Witter Reynolds, The 1988 Feed Grain Program by Al Flemming of the ASCS, Credit Risks and Alternatives by Don Delph of FHA and Greg Diehl of Lancaster Farm Credit, Crop Insurance by Mark Kooker of the University of Delaware and Health and Environmental Risks by Winand Hock of Penn State.

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