

# Hay Demonstrations At The Western Tillage Field Day

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre) — Hay is important to Pennsylvania agriculture. As a major feed grown by dairy and livestock producers, it has the potential to be a viable, marketable commodity. Unfortunately, our weather often works against hay quality. Trying to beat the rain and produce high-quality hay is a challenge to eastern forage producers. But there are management tools available that can help reduce the risks of hay-making. Some of the newer technologies will be demonstrated at the Western Tillage Field Day to be held on Wednesday, July 20 at the Robert Smith Farm, New Alex-

andria, Pa.

One method of beating the rain is to speed up the process of drying hay. By baling after two days instead of three, we reduce the chances of hay getting rained on. The use of hay conditioners at mowing time has been practiced for many years -- conditioning modified plants such that water moves through the stems more rapidly, thus increasing drying rate.

A new type of conditioning called chemical conditioning will be demonstrated at the field day. Chemical conditioning uses chem-

icals applied at mowing time that decrease the drying time of cut forage. With the right weather conditions, chemical conditioners can reduce drying time by an additional day.

Many new products called drying agents or chemical conditioners are now on the market. These products usually contain potassium and/or sodium carbonate. Chemical conditioners work well on legumes such as alfalfa, birds-foot trefoil and red clover, but they are not effective on grasses. Research has shown that drying agents perform best during the second and third cutting and work least effectively during the first cutting and late autumn cutting. These products have not been shown to adversely affect animals.

Another way to make and store hay that will be demonstrated at the field day is the new round bale wrapper. Baling at a higher moisture reduces the time hay is in the field, which is why many dairy farmers have gone to the practice of storing forage as silage or haylage. But not all forage producers have silage equipment or adequate silage storage capacity to handle all

their forage. A rather new form of silage that received much publicity a few years ago was round bale silage. Unfortunately, air leakage has been a problem. Round bale wrappers have potential to prevent or reduce air leakage and therefore reduce spoilage.

The Western Tillage Field Day will also demonstrate advanced concepts in land tillage, conserva-

tion practices, nutrient management and economic crop production. The event is sponsored by Penn State Cooperative Extension, USDA Soil Conservation Service, the Pennsylvania Forage-Grassland Council and various Pennsylvania agribusinesses. For more information contact your county Cooperative Extension office.

## Dairies Of Distinction

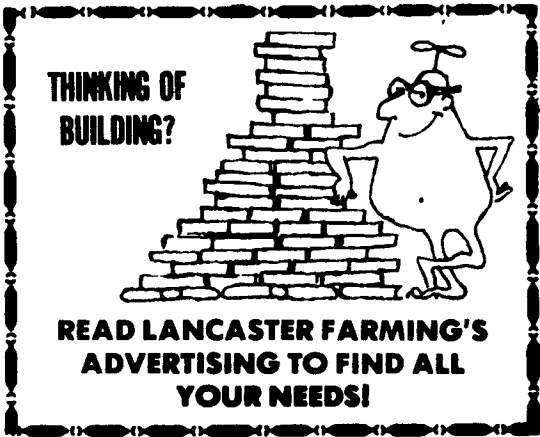
Ten Daires of Distinction have been selected from among 31 1988 applicants from Berks, Bucks, Chester, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery and Northampton Counties (Region 20). The winning farms were chosen because of their attractive appearance. The purpose of the Dairy of Distinction awards is to recognize and encourage farmers who keep attractive farmssteads and to help create a positive public image for milk and milk products.

Region 20 winners were guests at a dinner, Thursday evening, June 16th, at the West End Fire Company, Stowe, Pennsylvania, where they received certificates of recognition and Dairy of Distinction farm signs. A representative of each farm introduced family members and co-workers and briefly described the farm

operation.

The Dairy of Distinction program is given financial support by milk dealers and cooperatives, farm equipment and dairy equipment businesses and the American Dairy Association.

The 1988 winners are: Ben Beiler, Pinta Lane Farm, Cochranville; K.W. and H.M. Blatt, Vista Grande Farm, Jonestown; Warren W. Detweiler, Perkasio; Donald E. Landis, Spring Breeze Farm, Myerstown; John C. and William J. Mertz, Mertz Bros., Kutztown; Landis S. Reid, Greenwood Farm, Parkesburg; Maynard Rothenberger, Merrymeade Farm, Lansdale; DJSP Schuler, S-Pine Lawn Farm, Fleetwood; Dennis and Sharon Wampler, Shar-A-Den Farm, Lebanon; Clyde, Thomas and William Williams, Maple Grove Farm, Oxford.



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