

Indiana Farmers Hold Board Meeting

BY RANDY WELLS
Indiana Co. Correspondent

Discussions on how to increase membership and how to decrease deer crop damage highlighted the November meeting of the Indiana County Farmers Association.

Held at the home of board member Daniel George near

Brush Valley on Nov. 1, the meeting focused on appointing a chairman to oversee the association's annual membership drive, and on how to control the size of the area deer herd, which some board members said is causing as much crop damage as the summer's drought.

Association president Stan Fabin of Indiana RD 1, said the Pennsylvania Farmers Association's goal for the county group is to increase its membership from 433 to 437.

"We've met our membership goal each of the last three years," Fabin said, "but it's getting harder each year." The board members discussed their conversations with potential chairmen, but reported they had been unable to convince any members to accept the leadership roles of chairman for the membership committee or the womens committee.

"The committees are pretty much ready to go, we just need a chairman," said Peter Schaeffer, the association's PFA Regional Organization Director.

Fabin asked the board members to continue talking with county members who might be persuaded to assume a chairmanship position.

In response to reports of severe deer damage in some sections of the state, the board members were asked to complete a "Follow Up to Game Damage Survey" which will be returned to PFA for possible policy action.

The survey asked county board members to rate their deer crop damage on a scale ranging from non-existent to extensive, and to list crops most damaged, types of repellents which were most effective, and the extent of cooperation provided by the Game Commission's District Game Protectors.

Because of the extremely dry weather conditions over the summer, deer damage seems to be more severe than usual, several board members reported.

George said some of his fields of sweet corn yielded only about one-quarter of a normal crop because of the deer.

The Game Commission believes crop damages can be reduced by making more land available to hunters who will then harvest a larger number of deer; Fabin said. The August-September edition of the Indiana County Farmers Association newsletter reported A.K. Mack, the Game Commission's Farm Game Manager, is working with hundreds of landowners who have more than 50 acres, to encourage them to keep their land open for public hunting. In exchange for granting hunting privileges, landowners receive safety zone signs and an allotment of Christmas tree seedlings and other cover shrubs.

Fabin said Game Commission officials sometimes ask farmers why they post their land if they have deer problems. But he said the damage done by inconsiderate hunters who drive vehicles through fields and tear down fences is sometimes as bad as the damage done by the whitetails.

According to the Indiana County Treasurer's office, all allocated doe hunting licenses for the county for this hunting season have been sold through the Game Commission's new bonus doe license

program. The county's allocation for this year is 11,400 licenses, up from 8,500 in 1987.

George, the association's Governmental Relations chairman, reported on a legislator training session scheduled for Dec. 5 in Clearfield. The session, he said, should be especially helpful for new board members who will need to approach area lawmakers on legislative matters.

Indiana County farms have been visited by local legislators on several occasions in recent months.

U.S. Rep. Joe Kolter, D-Beaver County, met with about 40 area farmers and state and local elected officials on July 16 at the Brookside Dairy near Indiana to discuss federal drought relief measures.

On Aug. 2, Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Boyd E. Wolff toured the Richard Simpson farm near Georgeville to inspect drought-stunted corn fields along with Clayton Winebark, the department's Southwest Regional Director and about 100 local farmers.

And two days later state Rep. Paul Wass, R-Indiana, visited Mr. George's Brush Valley farm to survey deer damage.

Fabin asked the board members for direction on how he should respond to requests for the association's membership list from three associate members. The associate members are businessmen who want to use the names as a mailing list for advertising flyers.

Current policy stipulates the membership list may only be distributed to regular members, and not associate members, Fabin said.

But it was decided the advertisements may offer legitimate and useful savings to the members. So the board decided to ask the membership, through their newsletter, if they would like to be included on advertising mailing lists from associate members.

In other action, board member Dave Bork of Homer City RD 4 was appointed as the group's new Ag Marketing chairman. Charles Deabenderfer of Indiana RD 3 was reappointed as Member Services chairman, and Robert Cameron of Homer City RD 1 was reappointed as Members Relations chairman.

Fabin reminded the members that by their December meeting the board needs to have a list of the top 10 priority issues they would like the PFA to work on. Possible issues, he suggested, might be water quality, taxes, animal welfare and solid waste disposal. He asked the members to review the PFA 1988 Policy book for ideas.

FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

(Continued from Page A10)

Methodist Church.
Jefferson County Extension annual meeting and century farm recognition.

Friday, November 18
Shepherd's Symposium, Chatham Center, Pittsburgh; 11/18-19.
Sullivan County Dairy Herd Health meeting, Millview Wesleyan Church, Millview, 1 p.m. Dr. Larry Hutchinson, speaker.

Bucks County DHIA annual meeting, St. Matthew's Church, Ridge Road, Keller's Church, 7 p.m.

Farm City week begins, runs through November 24.

Saturday, November 19
First annual antique model and toy show. Benefit Denver Fire Company, Denver Fire Hall, from 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Berks County 4-H horse club banquet, 6:30 p.m., Berks County 4-H Center.

Lancaster County Farm City Tour runs Saturday and Sunday from

1 to 5 p.m. Call the extension office 394-6851 for directions.

Monday, November 21
ADA/DC District 18 annual meeting. Holliday Inn, Grantsville, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 22
12th annual Lancaster Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Industry Banquet, Willow Valley Resort and Conference Center, 7 p.m.

Ephrata Young Farmers' Dairy Management Meeting, Ephrata High School, 7:45 p.m.

Annual Forage Conference, Keller Auditorium, University Park, 9 a.m.

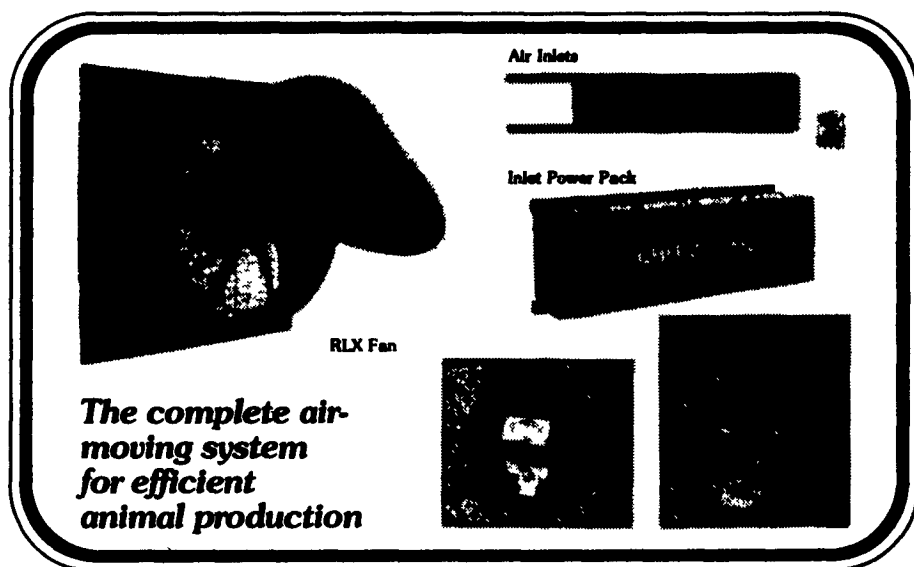
Crawford County Cooperative Extension annual banquet and meeting at Elk's Club, Meadville, 7:30 p.m.

Franklin County, DHIA annual meeting Kauffman's Community Center, 7 p.m.

Saturday, November 26
Mercer County Holstein annual meeting.

CHORE-TIME

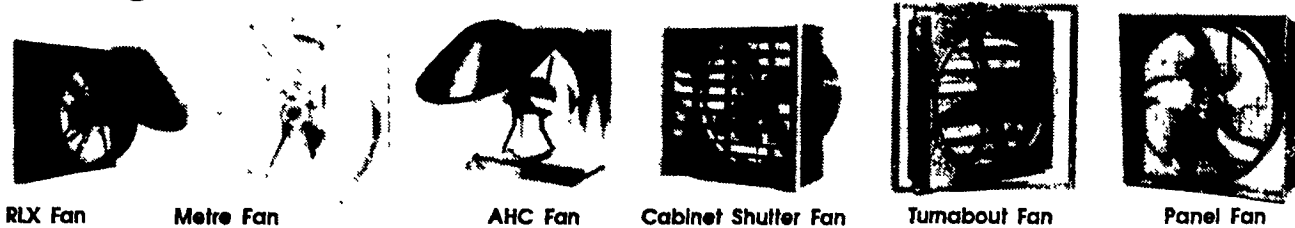
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