

BY RANDY WELLS

Indiana Co. Correspondent-
The winner in Indiana County's 1988 Five Acre Corn Club competition achieved a production level more than 20 bushels per acre better than the county average. But that county average was off 40 percent from 1987, and the cost of raising corn in the county was more than doubled over the previous year.

At the annual Crops and Soils Day program at Rustic Lodge in Indiana last week, David Elkin of Marion Center was recognized as the county's Five Acre Corn Club champion, with a production of 102.1 bushels per acre. Clair Braughler of Rochester Mills was the Five Acre Corn Silage winner, with a yield on 16.23 tons per acre.

William H. George of Shelocta had the best alfalfa fields in the Five Acre competition, with a production of 4.6 tons per acre.

According to statistics provided by Gene Schurman, county cooperative extension agent, Indiana County's average corn production in 1988 was 81.8 bushels per acre, compared to 138.3 bushels per acre the year before. Further 1988 corn analysis, Mr. Schurman said, indicated an average of 20,573 stalks per acre, 99.5 percent of which were standing and 8.1 percent of which were barren when the count was made.

Despite the summer drought, moisture content was actually higher in 1988 corn than 1987 corn, and the number of barren stalks decreased from '87 to '88, he said. 1988 moisture content in Indiana County corn averaged 29.9 percent, up from 24 percent in '87.

"The plants sucked up moisture in the late August rains, then wouldn't give it up," Schurman said.

The incidence of barren corn stalks declined from 8.7 percent in 1987 to 8.1 percent in '88.

Perhaps the most significant statistic revealed was the cost of production figures. Schurman said the average cost of producing a bushel of corn in Indiana County in 1988 was \$2.76, compared to \$1.29 in 1987.

The average corn silage yield in the county also declined dropping from 24.26 tons per acre in 1987 to 12.75 tons per acre in '88, he said. However, the cost per acre for silage also dropped from \$234.71 in 1987 to \$218 in '88.

There was little significant change in the county's alfalfa crops between the two years, Schurman reported, with the high yield being 4.6 tons per acre in both '87 and '88.

The Crops and Soils Day program, attended by about 140 farmers and 15 commercial exhibitors, also offered local farmers the chance to pick up three credits



Honored at the Indiana County Crops and Soils Day for their proficiency were, from left, William H. George of Shelocta, a five-acre alfalfa club winner; David Elkin of Marion Center, a five-acre corn club winner; and Clair Braughler of Rochester Mills, a five-acre corn silage club winner. With them at far right is Stan Fablin, extension agronomy chairman.

needed for keeping pesticide and herbicide spraying licenses current. Dennis Culley of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture updated the farmers on changes in the pesticide licensing procedures, and Ward Stover, director of the Indiana County

Cooperative Extension office, discussed pesticide safety.

Penn State Extension agronomists Robert Hartzler and Lynn Hoffman presented programs entitled "Weed Control Update for Corn, Small Grains and Alfalfa,"

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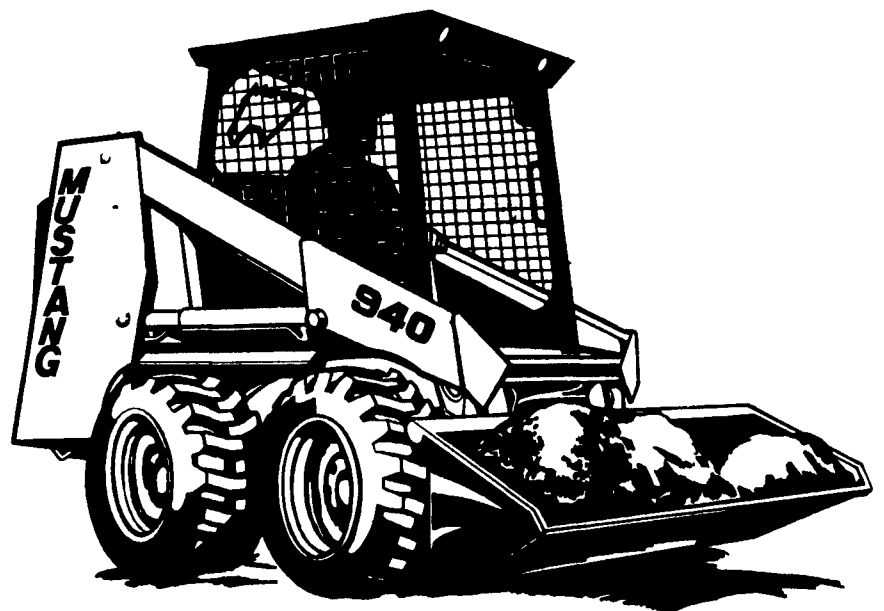
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