

# Blessington Becomes Extension Director

COLLEGE PARK, Md.— University of Maryland graduate Dr. Thomas M. Blessington will become a regional extension director and head of the Western Maryland Research and Education Center on June 1.

Blessington, 43, will be responsible for operating the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station's 546-acre research facility located near Keedysville.

As Region 1 extension director, he will be the administrator in charge of four regional specialists located at the center, as well as seven cooperative extension service offices in the counties of Garrett, Washington, Alleghany, Carroll, Baltimore, Frederick, and Harford.

"Dr. Blessington's educational background and unique training make him ideally suited for this new administrative assignment," said Dr. Craig Oliver, director of the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service. "Under his leadership, the extension service will meet the challenges and needs of



Dr. Thomas M. Blessington

western Maryland citizens in our rapidly changing society."

"We are especially pleased with

Dr. Blessington's management experience at the academic department and regional center level," said Dr. Robert Kennedy, director of the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station. "His extensive background of dealing with capital construction is important as we continue our over-\$1 million building program at the Western Maryland Center. And his horticultural background makes him an excellent choice for overseeing our research benefiting western Maryland agriculture."

Blessington earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in horticulture from the

University of Maryland at College Park. His doctoral and current research focus is on developing post-production systems for interior ornamentals.

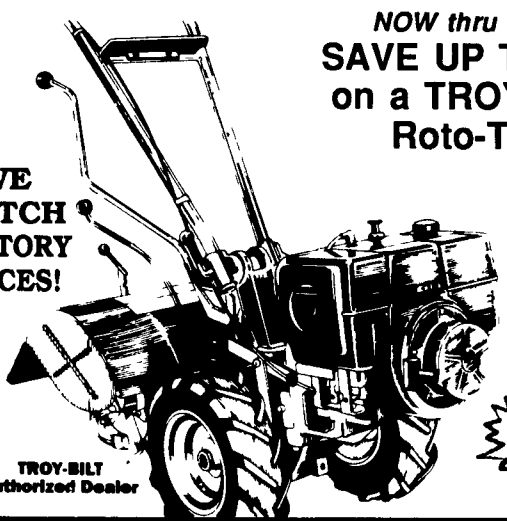
He is a former professor and plant science department head at the University of Nevada, and was resident director of the Texas A&M University's Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Weslaco, TX, before returning to Maryland.

"My career has progressed through agricultural support, teaching, and research to now include an active role in administrative leadership and manage-

ment," said Blessington. "I look forward to providing leadership and management for the people and programs of the Western Maryland Research and Education Center, the Agricultural Experiment Station, and Cooperative Extension Service."

The Western Maryland Research and Education Center was established by the Agricultural Experiment Station in 1984. Supporting the diverse agricultural segments of Western Maryland, research at the center includes fruit cultivar and rootstock trials, integrated pest management, and biocontrol studies.

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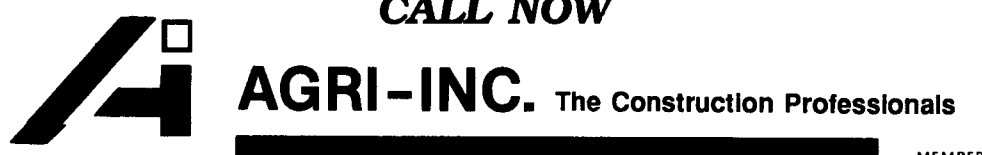
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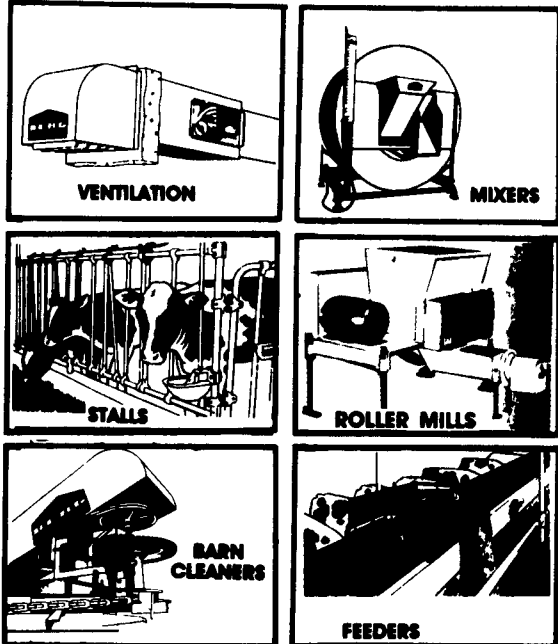


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