

Cooperative Extension Celebrates 75 Years

**ROBERT E. LEIBY and
DAIVD L. DUNBAR**
Lehigh County Cooperative
Extension Office

All county residents are invited to the annual meeting of the Lehigh County Cooperative Extension on Saturday, November 17, 1990 at the Schnecksville Fire Hall. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a social. At 7 p.m., the banquet begins, followed by a program that recognizes 75 years of cooperative extension in Lehigh County. An oral history will be presented on the life of the extension agent by Glenn Ellenberger (1951 to 1980) and William Hacker (son of Alvin Hacker, 1916 to 1951). Wayne Schutjer, associate dean for the College of Agriculture for Cooperative Extension, will also speak.

Combined with the annual meeting is the 4-H Achievement Night. As a culmination of the past year's work, 4-H achievement awards and a brief business meeting will take place.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$4 for children under 12. The deadline to make reservations is November 1. Call the Lehigh County Extension Office for reservation information, (215)

391-9840.

Other Coming Events

Phone you county extension office to obtain more information about the following educational programs (in Lehigh County, phone (215) 391-9840): • New Jersey/Pennsylvania equine short course:

Foot Care - 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 6, North Hunterdon High School NJ.

Foot Care - 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 7, Montgomery County 4-H Center PA.

Retraining the Problem Horse - 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 28, Montgomery County 4-H Center PA.

• Swine Producers Meeting, 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 7, Gratz Fire Company Hall, Gratz (Schuylkill County).

• Keystone Shepherd's Symposium - Friday, Saturday and Sunday - December 7, 8 and 9, Sheraton Lancaster, Lancaster.

• Penn State Income Tax Institutes - Tuesday and Wednesday, December 11 and 12, Rt. 100 and I-78, Holiday Inn, Allentown.

Wednesday and Thursday, December 12 and 13, Family Heritage Restaurant, Rt. 113, Franco-

nia (Montgomery County).

Autumn Poisons For Ruminants

There are a number of plants containing hydrocyanide compounds which can cause cyanide poisoning in ruminants. Common forage crops containing these compounds include sorghums and sudangrasses. Leaves of wild cherry trees found in fence-rows of pastures can also be poisonous.

Fall is the time when leaves from these plants are most deadly. Environmental conditions such as drought, wilting, and frost increase concentrations of hydrocyanide compounds in the leaves and make them more toxic.

When the leaves are eaten, the toxin is activated by the microorganisms in the rumen. Because of differences between their enzyme systems, cattle are more susceptible to poisoning than sheep. Symptoms such as weakness, trembling, and difficult breathing can occur within ten to fifteen minutes. Convulsions, coma, and death generally occur within an hour.

Corn Production Practices Survey

In late June, Jayson Harper, Penn State ag economist, sent a

survey to county extension agents to gain insights into the status of certain corn production practices in Pennsylvania. The survey was sent to all counties which had 5,000 or more acres of corn planted in 1988. A total of 56 surveys were mailed (out of 67 counties) and 46 (82 percent) were returned. Of the 1,480,000 acres of corn planted in 1988, responses were received from counties representing 1,273,600 acres (86 percent).

The following is a preliminary summary of selected portions of the survey:

Rotations: 17.1% of Pennsylvania corn acreage is in continuous corn; 10.8% of corn acreage is in a corn/soybean rotation; 33.5% of corn acreage is in a corn/hay rotation; 25.8% of corn acreage is in a corn/small grains/hay rotation; 12.8% of corn acreage is in other (unspecified) rotations.

Manure Application: 66.5% of corn acreage in Pennsylvania receives manure; 60.5% of the manure is from dairy cattle, with the remainder split fairly evenly among poultry, hots and beef cattle.

Nitrogen Fertilizer Timing 41.2% of nitrogen fertilizer is put down preplant; 25.1% is applied at planting; 33.7% is applied at sidedressing.

Weed Management Cultivation: 81.4% of corn acres in Pennsylvania receive no cultivation; 13.1% receive one cultivation; 2.8% receive two or more cultivations.

Include Marketing In Farm Business Decision

In the September/October issue of "Farm Economics," a Penn State College of Agriculture newsletter, Tom Brewer, ag economist, discussed ways to enhance the marketing of farm products. The following is a brief summary of his suggestions:

• Produce premium-eligible, high-quality products.

• Time sales to better coincide with seasonally high prices.

• Use forward contracts, futures, or options market to lock-in a price.

• Deal directly with the consumer by operating U-pick farms, roadside markets, or milk jugger systems.

• Contract for sale of crops and animals in advance.

• Join marketing cooperatives.

You may request a copy of "Farm Economics" through your county extension office. In Lehigh County, phone (215) 391-9840.

Iraqi Embargo Affects World Agriculture

Higher oil prices resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait will increase the cost of growing, processing, packaging and distributing food. Because of the rapidly changing situation, it's unclear how much and how fast the increases will ripple through food prices.

While food transportation costs probably will rise in coming months, rail costs are partly shielded from short-term movements in fuel prices. Railroads often hold significant inventories of diesel fuel and buy fuel under long-term contracts. For barge transport, this summer's lower freight rates suggest competitive pressures will limit rate increases in the fall.

The United Nations-sponsored general trade embargo will significantly cut Iraq's food supplies. Because imports usually provide more than 75 percent of Iraq's caloric need, its citizens will see very tight food markets in coming months. Last year, about one-fourth of Iraq's agricultural imports came from the United States. Other major suppliers have been Australia, Canada, the European Community, and Turkey.

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