

AFT Video Carries Important Message

NORTHAMPTON, Mass. — Farmers speak for themselves in "Farmland Forever," a new documentary video produced for the American Farmland Trust (AFT) by Florentine Films.

AFT is a national conservation organization devoted to protecting America's farmland resources. The video is one way AFT is meeting the public education component of its program, which also includes policy development and land acquisitions.

Four farm families in New England and California are featured in the 18-minute VHS video. They have protected their farmland using a technique called purchase of development rights (PDR).

PDR programs give landowners a valuable option to selling their land for housing developments and shopping malls. With PDR, farmers can sell the right to develop their land instead of the land itself.

They continue to own their property and are paid for the additional, non-farm development value. As Neil McIsaac, a California dairyman in the video describes it, "We've got land that's worth something. And the development rights are separate from the land.

Rather than waiting somewhere down the line and cashing everything out, we're able to sell the development rights and use those dollars either back in the operation, or to reinvest to give us some financial security to bring another family member along."

The farmers filmed present their experiences with PDR programs with candor, sincerity, and humor. Gordon Williams speaks about his family's strong land stewardship ethic. His son Daryl represents the

11th generation on their Connecticut River Valley farm. With true Yankee humility he confesses, "I feel the sale of my development rights makes me sort of a hero because I've always felt very strongly about the land and no matter what happens to me now, it'll always be a farm."

AFT wanted the video to show the benefits of PDR by having successful, commercial farmers explain why they chose to protect their land by selling development

rights. AFT was especially interested in reaching farmers in states that have new PDR programs or where PDR is under discussion.

"By using farmers to explain the program and what it meant to them, the video is an excellent way to reach other farmers. We'll definitely use it," said Boyd E. Wolff, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture.

The sale of development rights also provides farmers with a valuable option in estate planning.

AFT has a new brochure available, "Your Land, Your Legacy," that outlines several estate planning and conservation strategies.

For more information on purchasing copies of the video, or receiving AFT's literature on the purchase of development rights, estate planning, and other farmland protection techniques, contact the American Farmland Trust, Northeastern Office, One Short Street, Northampton, MA 01060.

Watch For Coccidia Infection In Sheep

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.)— Limited pasture land caused by the drought has prompted many sheep farmers to house and feed their animals in confined quarters, which can lead to an increase in coccidia infections, according to a sheep expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Two factors seem to trigger a coccidia outbreak: stress, and poor sanitation in confined areas," says Dr. Clair Engle, associate professor of animal science.

Coccidia is caused by tiny para-

sitic protozoa entering the walls of the intestinal tract. The protozoa multiply, swelling and rupturing the cells of the intestinal wall. "These ruptures cause hemorrhaging, resulting in bloody diarrhea and dark, tarry feces," Engle says. "If feces containing these parasites are permitted to contaminate feed and water, or if sheep pick them up from grazing or licking contaminated areas, they become infected."

Most sheep carry coccidia protozoa, but adult sheep seldom show clinical signs. Coccidia

often cause sudden death in lambs three weeks old and younger. "Coccidia are opportunistic parasites," says Engle. "This means they do the most damage during stressful periods, such as lambing, weaning, moving, unfavorable weather and outbreaks of other infectious diseases."


Nearly all farm animals are susceptible to some form of coccidia, but sheep do not transmit the parasite to other species, nor do they become infected with the coccidia protozoa from other species.

"If one of your sheep is showing signs of the disease, have your veterinarian confirm the disease as soon as possible and prescribe


necessary treatment," Engle says.

All animals in the herd should be treated. Those with clinical symptoms should receive individual sulfa drug treatment, and those showing no signs can be treated by medication mixed with feed or water.


"You and your veterinarian also should discuss preventative measures for controlling continued outbreaks," Engle says. "The best prevention for this insidious parasite infection is a program that combines a watchful eye for symptoms, good sanitation practices and a feed-grade coccidiostat."




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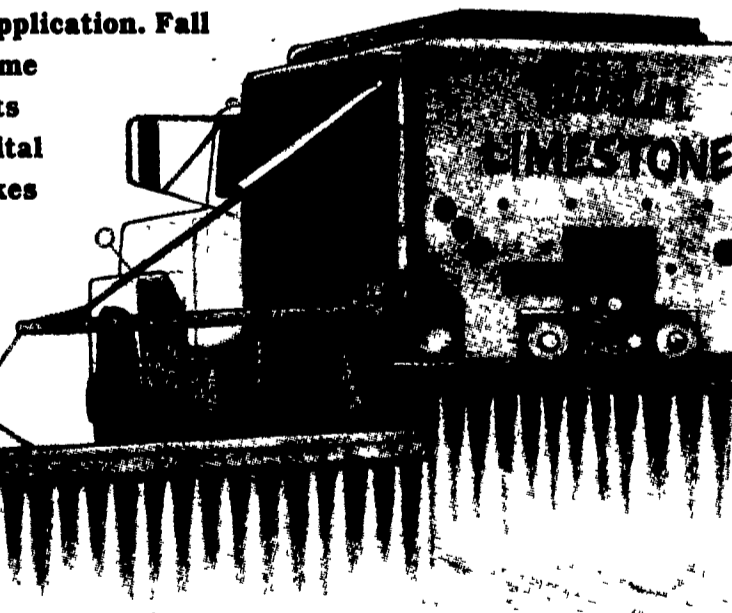
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