

Conference Highlights Sustainable Ag

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.)—Farming in an ecologically sound manner while maintaining profitability is a major challenge facing Pennsylvania's agricultural producers.

With the help of research and education, more farmers have the knowledge they need to sustain their operations and the environment.

The development of sustainable agriculture systems will be highlighted at a statewide conference Feb. 7-8 at the Keller Conference

Center on Penn State's University Park Campus.

"Farming for the Future: Sustainable Agriculture in Pennsylvania" is organized by the Pennsylvania Sustainable Agriculture Steering Committee, an ad hoc group of farmers, educators, consumers, processors, and marketers.

"To be sustainable, agricultural practices must be profitable, environmentally sound, energy efficient, and compatible with society's goals," said Dr. Herbert Cole, professor and head of Penn State's

plant pathology department. "We hope this conference raises awareness of the need for sustainability and serves as a building block in developing sustainable agriculture in Pennsylvania."

The conference will feature workshops, panel discussions and presentations by noted researchers and successful farmers. Topics include soil health and nutrient management; livestock, field crop, fruit and vegetable production; marketing; and sources of technical assistance. Speakers will include Dr. Lamartine Hood, dean of Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, and Boyd Wolff, Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture.

"Sustainable agriculture no longer can be considered a glorified name for organic or back-to-earth farming," said Tim Bowser, con-

ference coordinator and Penn State research technologist in entomology. "It represents everything from conservation tillage, integrated pest management, and large-scale composting to marketing of specialty agricultural products. One goal of the conference is to encourage formation of a statewide net-

work to help farmers adopt more of these practices."

For information on conference registration, contact the Sustainable Agriculture Conference, The Pennsylvania State University, 306 Ag Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802, (814) 865-8301.

Program Helps Get Rid Of Old Pesticides

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.)—A pilot program offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and Penn State Cooperative Extension will help agricultural producers in six counties dispose of old and potentially dangerous pesticides free of charge.

The program, called Chemsweep, will be tested in Bedford, Fulton, Lebanon, Lehigh, Snyder and Union counties, and eventually could be expanded statewide. Farmers in these counties have until Feb. 4 to sign up for the program.

"Chemsweep allows farmers to get rid of banned or outdated pesticides at no charge," said Dr. Winand K. Hock, professor of plant pathology and director of Penn State's Pesticide Education Program.

Producers can obtain information and a chemical disposal form from their local Penn State Cooperative Extension office, said Hock. Disposal will be arranged by the Department of Agriculture after a complete list of outdated pesticides has been developed.

Growers of all agricultural commodities will be eligible to participate in Chemsweep in the pilot counties. "Mushroom growers,

nursery and greenhouse operators, Christmas tree farmers, and all crop and livestock producers are eligible," Hock said. "But commercial and public applicators, pesticide dealers, and homeowners are not eligible."

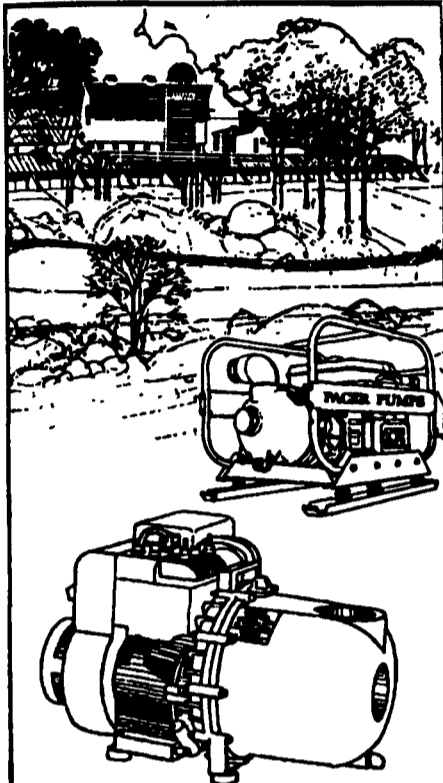
The program will accept any pesticide with a registration number from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or with a prior U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) identification number.

Unidentified materials will be accepted only if they can be identified by PDA's pesticide laboratory. Materials labeled for homeowner use will not be accepted.

If you have unknown materials stored on your farm, check the containers for labels and collect information on what crop or pest the material may have been used for.

"When a list of old pesticides for each county is complete, the pesticides will be collected either at a central collection facility in the county or directly from their current storage location," Hock said.

Growers from the six participating counties who are interested in Chemsweep should contact their local Penn State Cooperative Extension office for more information.



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