

# Lancaster Farming

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## Nutrient Legislation Needs Work, Farmer Input

**VERNON ACHENBACH JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Nutrient management legislation has resurfaced among state agricultural leaders as an issue of concern to Pennsylvania farmers.

Most attention has focused on legislation that passed the House June 10 and has since been under the control of the state Senate Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee. That legislation is House Bill 496.

The committee has yet to act on the proposal, and has received some criticism from those wishing to see it enacted.

On Wednesday, representatives from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Sierra Club visited legislators and journalists in an

effort to bring attention to the bill. Representing the bay foundation was its president William Baker; Bob Hoyt, executive director of the Pennsylvania office of the foundation, and Lamonte Garber, its agricultural policy specialist.

Representing the Sierra Club was Jeffrey Schmidt, its registered Pennsylvania lobbyist.

While not critical of anyone specifically, the representatives of the two organizations said they were concerned that the legislation, which they worked to help achieve, would be lost in the shuffle of other legislative issues during the current session.

In discussing the bill, they said they were concerned about the life of the bill because it had received

(Turn to Page A19)



Floyd High, Ephrata poultryman, prepares dead birds, chicken manure, straw, and water in a composting bin to solve a major production problem.

## Composting Dead Birds Solves Environmental Problem

**EVERETT NEWSWANGER**  
Managing Editor  
EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — Mortality rates in poultry operations can run up to three percent of the housed birds. That's 1500 dead birds per 50,000. So what do you do with all the carcasses?

"It's harder and harder to dispose of dead birds through rendering," said John Schwartz, Lancaster County agent. "And burying the

birds is likely illegal. Incineration is costly and causes odors and nuisance complaints from the neighbors."

But one poultryman on Diamond Station Road has found an answer that uses old environmentally safe technology to overcome this major modern problem. Composting.

Nearly two years ago Floyd High contacted the University of

(Turn to Page A35)



Newly crowned Cheryl Anne Muraski, left, representing the Green-Dreher-Sterling Fair, was named the Pennsylvania Fair Queen at the annual convention. Runner-up was Jacy Clugston from the Manheim Farm Show.

## Berks Dairy Farmers Learn Importance Of Cow Comfort

**CONNIE LEINBACH**  
Berks Co. Correspondent  
LEESPORT (Berks County) — Cow comfort in housing is the best insurance against herd problems, said a Penn State extension agent Thursday.

Pat Richie, multi-county ag engineer, spoke on some of the latest innovations in animal housing at Dairy Day in the Berks County Agricultural Center. More than 100 Berks dairy farmers attended.

"We're better off if we keep our cows comfortable in their stalls," Richie said. "When you stress them, production goes down." Cutting costs in building smaller stalls may cause more problems down the road if cows are not comfortable, he said.

Richie showed slides of a newly remodeled heifer barn, owned by a Franklin County farmer.

The open barn is modeled after a design developed by the Virginia Polytechnical Institute. Though one side is exposed to the outside even in the bitterest winter weather, Richie said the barn stays rela-

tively warm.

Forty to 50 degrees is ideal for milk producing, Richie said. Along with that, however, cows need space.

The standard for free stalls used to be 26 feet long, he said. But now the ideal length is 30 feet for a

yearling and 40 feet for heifers who are ready to be calved.

Richie pointed out that a milking cow who does not have enough room may leave her stall and lie down in the alley, thus inviting disease and possible culling from the

(Turn to Page A36)



At the awards banquet of the Pennsylvania Young Farmers' Association held in Grantville Wednesday, a number of awards were presented. Manheim had the largest chapter, and Line Mountain had the largest increase in membership. In the photo, left, Roy Maurer received the Outstanding Young Farmer Advisor award, and Ronald Althoff was named Honorary Young Farmer. Group photos of other winners are on page A22.

### INDEX

Sec. A...Market Reports & General News.

Sec. B...Women's News, Public Sales & Mailbox Market.

Sec. C...Business News & Classified 4-36.

Sec. D...Classified 1-3.

See Story Index Page A3.