

# Critical Area Compliance Increases

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Robert L. Walker recently announced that a survey of the 16 soil conservation districts that represent the state's critical area revealed that 98 percent of farms within 1,000 feet of tidal waters and wetlands are now in compliance

with the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area regulations.

This figure shows an increase from 92 percent compliance announced in September 1991.

"I am extremely proud of Maryland farmers. They are doing their part as the traditional stewards of the land to protect the Chesapeake

Bay," Walker said.

"Our goal is 100 percent compliance and we are extremely close. We are definitely moving in the right direction," said Walker.

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law requires all agricultural land in the "Critical Area" to have a soil conservation and water quality plans by which it is managed.

Farmers receive technical assistance from local conservation districts to develop these plans that recommend site specific best management practices for resource protection.

"The soil conservation districts are to be complimented for providing farmers with the technical assistance required to protect these

all important critical areas. These districts do a tremendous job in helping farmers preserve our state's essential land and water resources," Walker said.

For more information on agricultural programs to protect the Chesapeake Bay, contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Office of Resource Conservation, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401, Telephone (410) 841-5865.

## Take A Look

### At Dairy Refund Procedures

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — Recently announced changes in dairy assessment refund procedures should prompt a "second look" from dairy farmers, according to a leader of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA).

Harold Shaulis, Jr., a member of PFA's board of directors and chairman of PFA's dairy advisory committee, said, "USDA regulations will now permit refunds for dairy operations which were previously ineligible because another person was added to or removed from the operation."

Dairy producers were assessed five cents per hundredweight (cwt.) of milk sold in 1991 as part of the Budget Reconciliation Act. Farmers who sold the same amount or less milk in 1991 than they did in 1990 are eligible for a refund. They must have milk receipts to verify their claim. Refund applications are currently being taken at county ASCS offices.

Under the revised rules, adding or removing persons to those shown as marketing milk for commercial purposes from the dairy unit will not be considered a change in operation if the persons being added or removed do not have their own dairy cows.

Exceptions are allowed for children with 4-H or FFA dairy projects or two individual dairy producers who marry during the base or refund period and combine their operations.

In addition, a transfer of milk marketing history will be permitted if all the dairy cattle and equipment are transferred to a family member. Transfer of the land which provided feed for the dairy operation and the dairy facility is no longer a requirement for a transfer of milk marketing history to occur.

Shaulis urged dairy farmers to contact their local ASCS office if they had not applied or been disapproved because of the previous policy. According to USDA, the deadline to file a signed application is March 16.

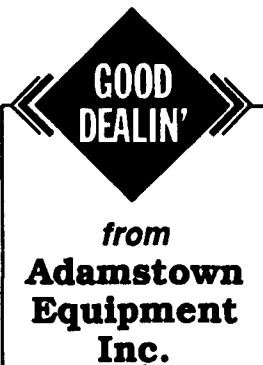


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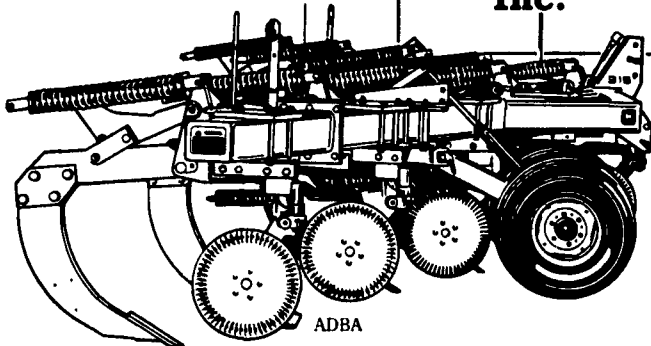
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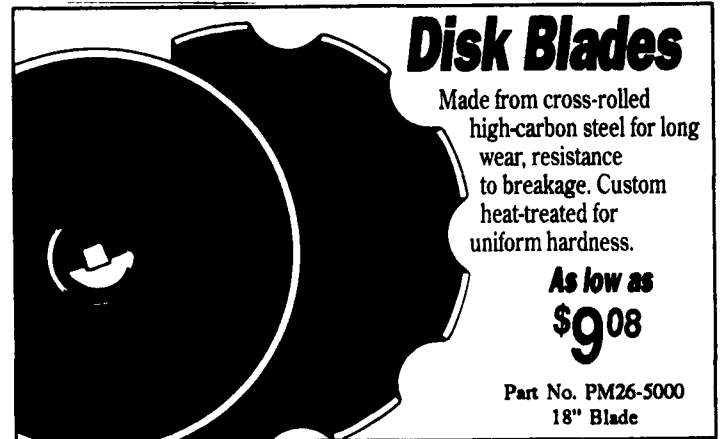
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