

Stream Bank Fencing

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — If cattle make a mud slide out of your creek side, consider fencing the stream bank.

"Fencing is a low-cost, low-maintenance farm management tool that has many benefits," says Dr. Margaret Brittingham, assistant professor of wildlife resources in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Limiting livestock access to stream banks prevents erosion and loss of productive land. It also keeps streams cleaner."

As livestock clumb up and down stream banks, the soil collapses and erodes, polluting the stream with sediment. Fencing permits vegetation to grow, which binds and stabilizes soil.

Plants also block agricultural runoff, trapping sediment and pesticides while absorbing excess nutrients before they enter the stream. This sends cleaner water downstream and supports a good neighbor policy.

By providing food, cover and nesting sites, streamside vegetation attracts birds and other wildlife. Cleaner water means better habitat for fish. Wildflowers, shrubs and trees may be planted, covering stream banks with a

variety of shapes and colors.

Fencing protects herd health too. Watering troughs are cleaner, more reliable sources of water than streams and are less likely to contain waterborne bacteria, which may cause bovine leptospirosis, mastitis and other ailments. Animals also are less likely to injure themselves on steep, crumbling stream banks.

Fencing your stream bank does not need to be an expense and a hassle. "Fences can be installed at little cost and may require little maintenance," says Brittingham. "Federal and state agencies encourage fencing, and many provide technical and financial assistance."

For more information about fencing and sources of assistance, see *Stream Bank Fencing: Green Banks, Clean Streams*, newly released by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. Free copies are available at the Penn State Cooperative Extension office in your county, or from the Publications Distribution Center, College of Agricultural Sciences, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802; (814) 865-6713.

USDA Changes Dairy Refund Eligibility

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Dairy producers do not need to comply with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions to receive refunds under the Dairy Refund Payment Program (DRPP), according to Richard Troutman, chairman of the Berks County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee.

According to Troutman, recent amendments to DRPP regulations eliminate that requirement in order for farmers to receive refunds on a 5 cents per hundredweight federal dairy assessment. The assessment was created as a milk production control.

"Refund payments under the program are not considered a price support payment for purposes of compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions," Troutman said.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 calls for reductions in the price received by producers for commercial milk marketings beginning Jan. 1, 1991 and ending Dec. 31, 1995. The act also authorizes refunds of amounts deducted from the producer's milk proceeds each year, if refund pay-

ment provisions are met.

Troutman said refunds of amounts deducted from 1991 commercial milk marketings under the DRPP began in January. Producers will be eligible to receive a refund of the entire amount deducted from their milk proceeds if they provide evidence that they did not increase milk marketings over the immedi-

ately preceding year, he said.

DRPP procedures also clarified the policy on transferring milk marketing history between producers. "Except for eligible transfers that can occur during either the base period or refund period, the eligibility requirements for transferring milk marketing history remain the same."

Young Farmers Award

(Continued from Page A35)



Crop Award winners, left to right, John Haldeman and Ruby and Darryl Bollinger.

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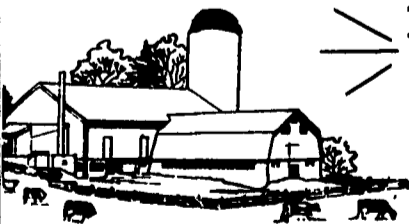
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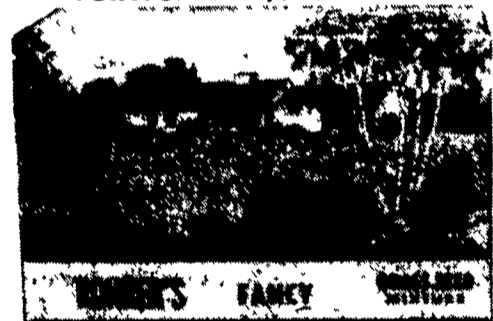
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