

## Late August Is Deadline For Summer-Seeded Alfalfa

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) — Alfalfa growers in the eastern U.S. can recover winter-killed production of their primary forage source by seeding a new crop before the end of August.

Last year's open winter caused significant winter kill of alfalfa in the New England states, according to Joey Mayer, field agronomy manager for Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. With reduced production, prices for quality alfalfa hay have been rising steadily, he said.

"The month of August is the best time for summer seeding," Mayer said. "In the New England area, summer seedings should be made by the middle of August. In

Pennsylvania and the Delmarva region, growers can seed as late as the end of the month.

"But the alfalfa plant should have 60 to 70 days of growth before the first frost to ensure adequate root and top development going into winter," Mayer said.

Mayer recommends the following steps for late-summer establishment of new alfalfa stand:

- Check soil pH; the optimum is

6.7 to 6.9. Use liquid or finely ground lime if a small but rapid pH change is required.

- Unless the field is sloping, direct seed without a nurse crop. Generally, no herbicide is required. However, perennial grasses — especially quackgrass — should be controlled with a grass herbicide.

- Seedbed preparation is the single most important step, according to Mayer. "Make sure

soil is firm before seeding," the Pioneer agronomist said.

- Select a newer alfalfa variety with proven winter hardiness. Premium varieties will provide a longer stand life and increased production because of improved yield potential and genetic resistance to insects and diseases.

- Optimum seeding rate is 12 to 18 pounds per acre, but will vary by area and planting conditions. Seed depth may need to be slightly

deeper than in the spring. Use of a cultipacker or roller is critical.

- Soil moisture is the most limiting factor for success in late summer seedings, but it's better to seed in dry soil than wait for rain. If irrigation is available to ensure stand establishment, use it.

Mayer advises farmers to check with their local seed sales representative variety availability and additional management information.

## PACD Awards Clean Water Farms

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — The Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Farm Awards for 1992 were presented at the quarterly conference of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) recently.

The program, jointly sponsored by Pennsylvania's Department of Agriculture and Environmental Resources, recognizes the state's farm operations which excel in water quality protection.

Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Boyd Wolff and Vic Funk, acting chief of DER's Bureau of Soil and Water Conservation, presented this year's four recipients, all dairy operations:

- In Clearfield County, near Grampian, Knob Farm, a father and son operation owned by Robert and Jeff Wriglesworth.

- In Northumberland County, overlooking the Susquehanna River, the RMD Schultz Farm, operated by three brothers, Ronald, Marlin, and Duane, and their families.

- In Franklin County, near Fayetteville, the farm of Evan and Lon Burkholder and their three sons.

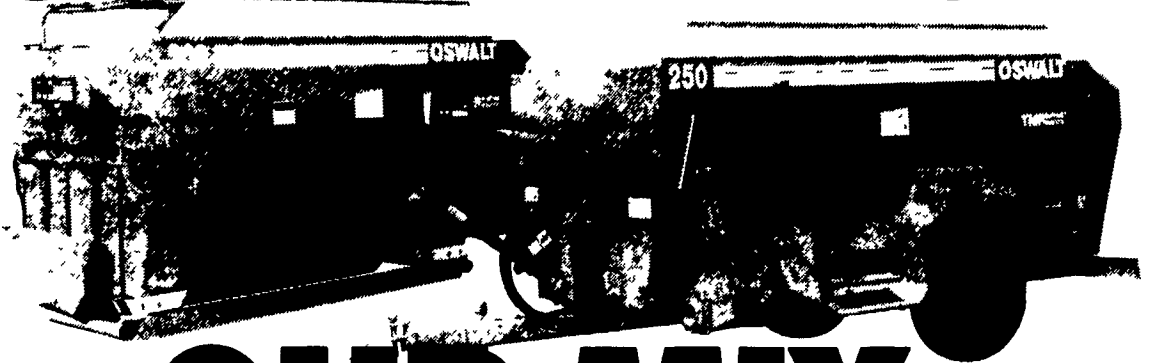
- In Lebanon County, south of Annville, the Butcher Brothers Farm, owned by Mark and Stanley Bucher and operated by Stanley and his wife Cindy since 1977.

The owners of these four operations have worked diligently to install and maintain farming practices which not only protect their land and help them maintain peak production, but also prevent soil and excess nitrogen and phosphorus from running into streams, lakes, and underground supplies.

This year's award recipients were nominated by their county conservation districts who were among representatives from all over the state, gathering to honor them at their regular PACD quarterly business conference and banquet.



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