

Forage Conference Announces Awards

TUNKHANNOCK (Wyoming Co.) — R. Wayne Harpster, owner/manager of Evergreen Farms, Inc., near Spruce Creek, in central Pennsylvania is the 1992 recipient of the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council's special award for his many contributions to Pennsylvania's forage and livestock industry and to the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council.

Harpster's new dairy operation, located along Pennsylvania Rt. 45 approximately 20 miles west of State College is one of the largest in Pennsylvania and when fully stocked will accommodate about 1,600 cows.

"It is a collection of the best ideas North American farms and farms had to offer," Harpster said. In preparation for building the new facility, he traveled to every corner of the country to see what was available and what worked best. What he came up with is a multi-million dollar dairy facility which features not only modern technology, but time honored simplicity.

Harpster is also one of Pennsylvania's premier conservation farmers. His first experience with no-till farming was in 1971 in cooperation with Penn State's former no-till specialist, the late William McClellan. Today Harpster farms 1,300 acres, including some 700 acres of corn, 600 acres of alfalfa, and 300 acres of pasture. Since 1976, 100 percent of his row crops

and alfalfa have been planted no-till.

A long time grassland enthusiast, in the late 1970s Wayne was named one of Pennsylvania's outstanding grassland farmers. He served on the board and as an officer of PFGC, and for the past several years has hosted the popular PFGC summer picnic held during Ag Progress Days at his cabin along Spruce Creek in Huntingdon County.

Research/Extension Award

This year's research/extension award will be shared by Peter L. LeVan and Richard F. Todd, employed by Penn State University in the Department of Dairy and Animal Science.

LeVan and Todd have conducted many forage utilization studies, primarily through grazing systems research at the Haller Livestock/Forage Farm on Penn State's campus. They have also formulated a total animal forage program which exemplifies efficiency of resource utilization and optimum animal and forage production. The primary animal in the system has been beef cattle; however, many of the systems they assisted in developing and evaluating have direct applicability to grazing dairy animals.

Although their research efforts have been many, they have also dedicated themselves to extending the information they have gained through research. During the past two years they have hosted nearly

1,200 visitors at the Haller Farm for educational meetings and tours of the facilities. The PFGC Pasture Grazing Day in 1991 utilized the Haller Farm and LeVan's expertise. Both have been involved in the supervision and training of students.

Forage/Conservation Farmer Award

Orner Farms, Inc. is a family operated dairy located in Clearfield County. Because of the conservation ethic and concern for water quality, the Orners have taken great care to install and maintain conservation practices on their home farm as well as rented ground.

When renting farms, they obtain leases sufficient in length to warrant installing the conservation practices such as contour strip cropping.

The Orners have closely followed their conservation plans since becoming conservation district cooperators in 1969. Other conservation practices which they use include grassed waterways, diversions, crop rotation, conservation tillage, nitrogen testing, and nutrient management.

Orner Farms, Inc. has set an example of how a large modern-day farming operation can exist on a watershed (within 600 feet of the reservoir), which is a public water supply.

Conservation Award

Joel Myers, state agronomist for Soil Conservation Service, is

known throughout Pennsylvania as a strong promoter and supporter of conservation farming practices.

Myers has directed and coordinated the conservation education aspects of Ag Progress Days, including the conservation tours. Recently, under his role as overall coordinator within SCS for forage systems. Myers assisted in incorporating the use of forages into SCS training on nutrient and manure management.

He also provides technical training to SCS, conservation district, consultants and others in the area of conservation planning, resource management, soil erosion, and water quality. However, Myers' real contribution to conservation throughout Pennsylvania has come through his ability to work cooperatively with many other organizations and agencies within the private sector as well as local, state, and federal governments.

Outstanding Pasture Producer Award

• West Region: Herb Guyer (Westmoreland County): Herb Guyer utilizes pasture and rotational grazing as the major forage source for his dairy herd in Westmoreland County farm. Herb rotationally grazes the herd through the approximately 15 paddocks on the 43 acres of native pasture.

The cows are moved about every two days so that fresh forage

is available. The native pastures have been limed and are top-dressed with manure or fertilizers to improve legume growth and production. As an indication of his attitude toward conservation, he was named the Westmoreland Conservation Farmer of the year in 1990. Guyer is active in his community and is a member of the American Guernsey Association and the Pennsylvania Farmer Association.

• Central region: John Reed Rodgers (Mifflin County): John Reed Rodgers, Plum Bottom Farm in Mifflin County has been selected as the Outstanding Pasture Producer for central Pennsylvania.

His herd of 42 Ayrshires and 15 Holsteins cows averaged more than 11,000 pounds of milk and 450 pounds of fat per acre during the past year while utilizing pastures as a major component of the dairy ration.

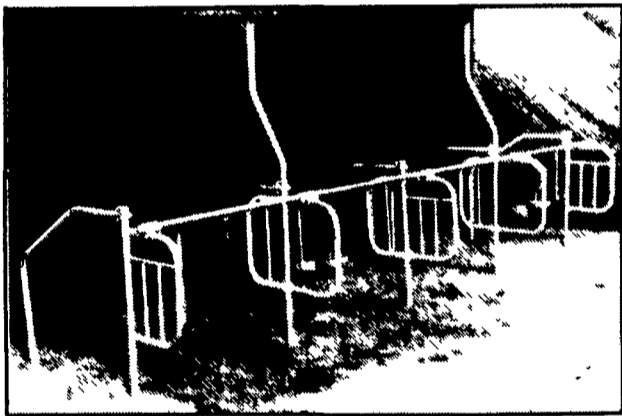
Rodgers has 20 acres of native pasture and 12 acres of improved pasture. He began strip grazing his old bluegrass "hillside" pastures and improving some pastures in 1991.

That is when he realized the value of pastures to his farming operation. Rodgers said it "has been almost unbelievable what the old-old sods will yield."

During 1991, the pH on 12 acres of pasture was limed to 7.1.

(Turn to Page A23)

Lapp Comfort Tie Stall

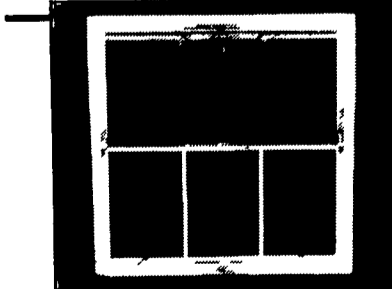


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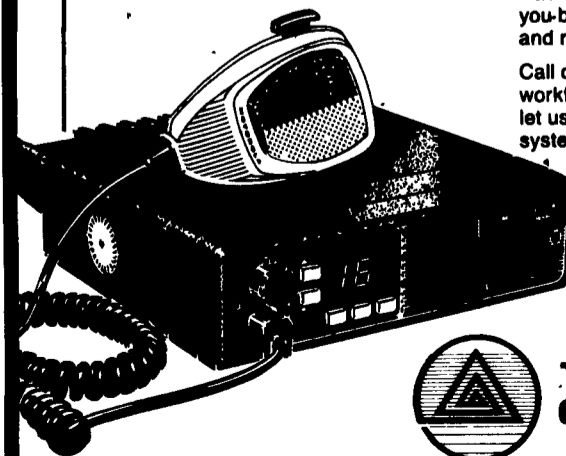
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