

Grower Wins World Forage Superbowl

ELKHORN, Iowa—"It takes a lot of attention and detail to make top quality hay," said champion alfalfa grower Roger Mikkelsen.

Recently, Mikkelsen won the commercial hay contest of the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis.

This year, Mikkelsen entered first-cut hay from a third-year stand of CimarronVR alfalfa. It tested 205 RFV.

"To get this kind of hay, you have to cut early and often," said Mikkelsen. "I take the first cutting in the bud stage and, thereafter, I cut at 28 to 32 day intervals. I get four cuttings a year, and sometimes I sneak in a fifth."

To avoid winterkill, Roger never cuts hay in September. But after freeze he takes a final cutting.

"Last winter was hard on alfalfa," he said. "The temperature dropped to 20 below in November and we had a warm-up in January.

There was a lot of ice sheeting, and plants in some of the older fields heaved. My three-year-old stand of CimarronVR alfalfa came through the winter in good shape, however. I like CimarronVR because it persists well and grows

back fast after cutting."

He grows corn, soybeans, and more than 200 acres of alfalfa. His main interest is the alfalfa, which he sells locally and to feed lots.

"I grow corn and soybeans mainly for rotation," he said. He

limes his soil a year before planting alfalfa to a pH of 7. Fertilizer is applied according to soil test before planting, and potash and phosphates are applied after the first cutting each year. Roger likes to plant 18 to 20 pounds of high

quality seed per acre.

The Mikkelsens love farming. "I get a lot of help from my wife and three daughters," said Roger. "They know about as much about alfalfa as I do."

Wenger Addresses PACD

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Pennsylvania Senator Noah Wenger of Lancaster County was guest speaker for the quarterly meeting of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) recently at the Holiday Inn in Grantville.

Wenger, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and co-sponsor of the Ag 2000 legislation, addressed the statewide gathering on prospects for 1993 agricultural and environmental legislation.

The senator predicted that the

1993 sessions of the General Assembly would see through the passage of a nutrient management bill which could address the needs of both farmers and the environmental community, and which would stress incentives and education. He also expects to see passage of environmental education legislation for Pennsylvania schools, and he believes we will see legislation implemented which would make it easier for industries to re-use former industrial sites, rather than undeveloped land, for expansion.

By releasing new industries

from financial responsibility for cleaning up industrial sites which have been polluted by the former owners, it would provide an economic incentive to revitalize former urban industrial areas and at the same time protect dwindling virgin countryside and farmland.

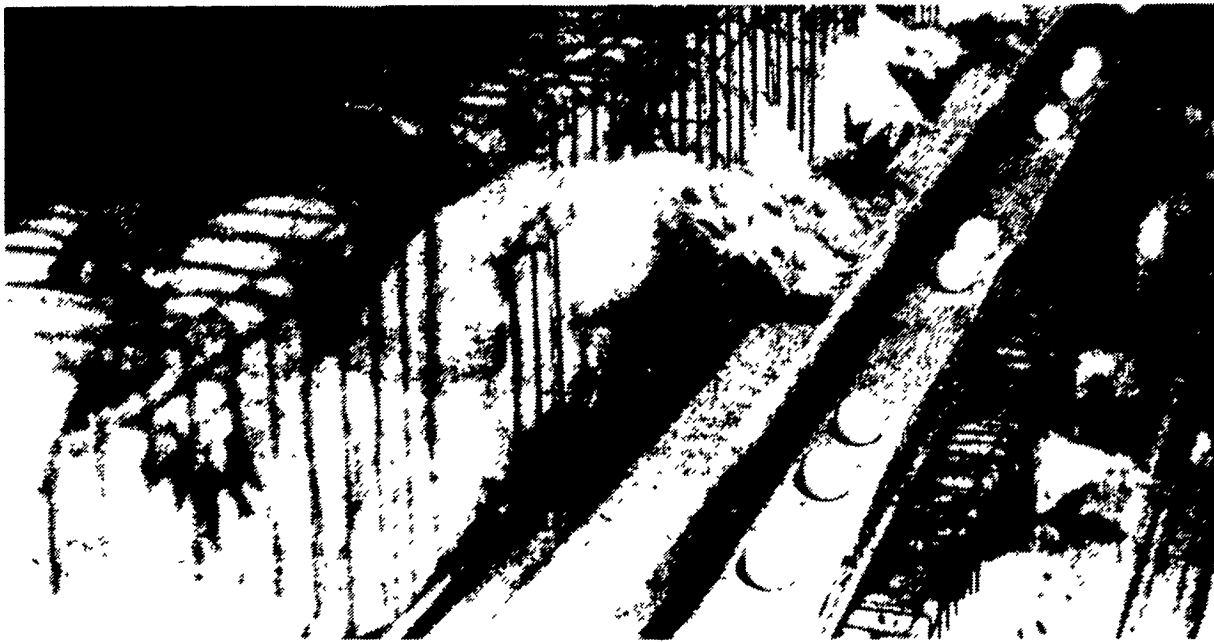
Senator Wenger credited conservation districts with serving as a valuable bridge between the agricultural and environmental communities, thus making it easier for policy makers to create solutions to problems which are mutually satisfactory to all concern-

ed. In noting the important service conservation districts provide, he quoted former President Eisenhower's statement, "Farming looks pretty easy when your plow is a pencil and your corn field is a thousand miles away."

The three-day session of conservation district directors and staff also consisted of training sessions and the preview of a slide presentation developed for all the county offices to use in their efforts to inform the public of the services provided by Pennsylvania's conservation districts.

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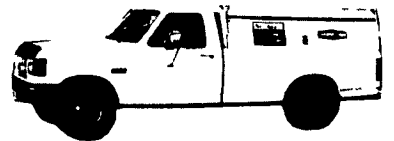
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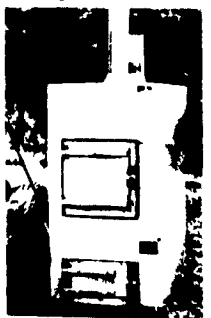
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