

Penn State Educates Lawmakers On Benefits Of Ag

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Somerset Co. Correspondent
SOMERSET (Somerset Co.) — It was called a legislative event. Its goal was to educate local lawmakers in how their communities can access Penn State Agricultural Sciences research through the Penn State Cooperative Extension service.

Lamartine F. Hood, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences, and several agricultural-related PSU professors joined local cooperative extension officials, county commissioners, and a state representative for the event.

Robert Antram, Marie Kieffer, and Robert Brown, extension officials, hosted a lunch for 14 at the Penn Alps Restaurant, Grantsville, Md., that was punctuated with a dessert of maple yogurt, a popular new item in the 1993 Farm Show food court.

The creamy product links the dairy and maple industries of Somerset County. It was discussed briefly by local native and Penn State student, guest Julie Maust, who has a summer internship at a local dairy.

Dean Hood used a video presentation to illustrate the importance of the cooperative extension to the local community regarding the precious natural resource called water.

Private citizens and food pro-

cessing industries can access the latest research from Penn State through the cooperative extension for practical water-system improvement measures.

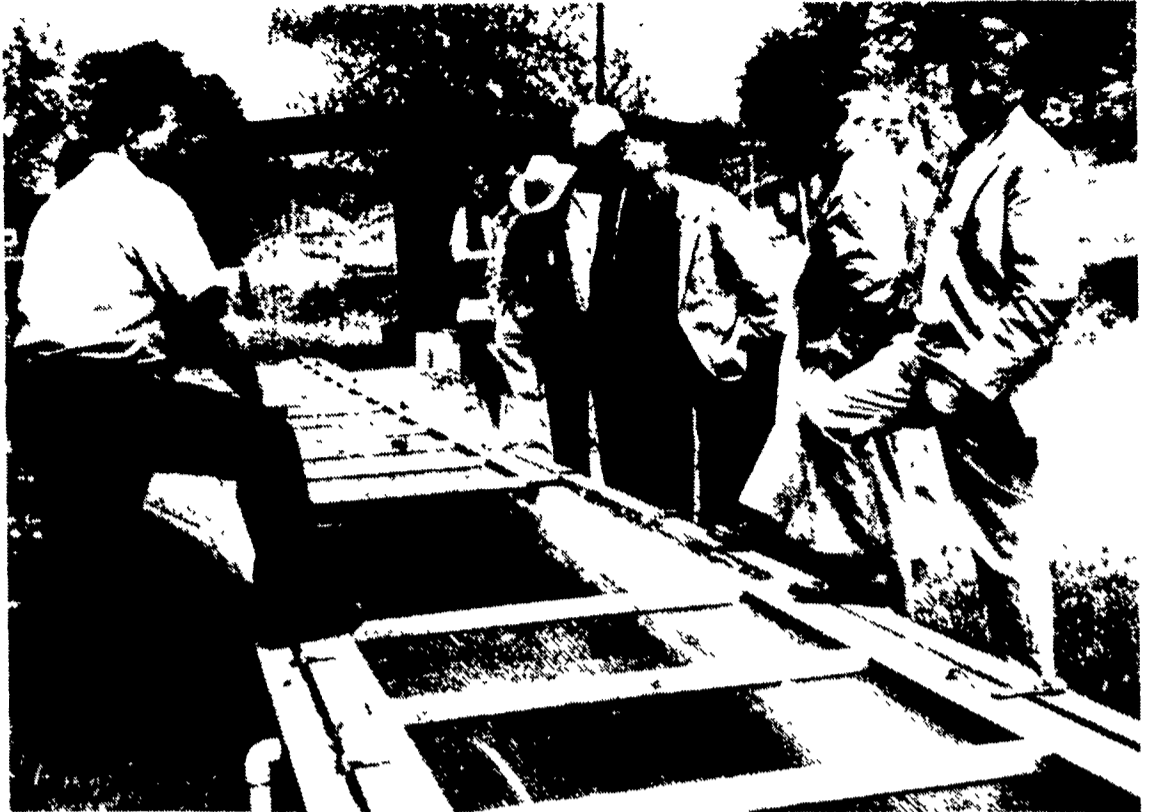
They can learn how to recycle, conserve, and purify the water they use, plus develop an awareness of potentially dangerous contaminants in their water sources, such as lead content, bacteria, and pesticides.

"You know the key is the extension service is really the window to the community," said Hood, "because of access to the larger university for help in answering questions from the private sector."

Dr. Harvey Manbeck, from the department of agricultural and biological engineering, using color slides, and passing samples of his product around the group, discussed the little-known market now opening for the Pennsylvania hardwood industry, specifically yellow-poplar, red maple, and red oak.

He talked mostly about Glulam products — taking small-sized pieces of lumber and gluing them together to make bigger pieces, which he said are actually stronger than a single piece of equal size to those glued together.

Professor Manbeck said Glulam lumber is so strong that it appears to have great promise for some types of highway bridge



Dale Jeffrey, left, is explaining to officials how stream water was diverted and cooled in underground piping before passing through the fish nursery in photo. From photo center to front to right, Julie Maust, Eric Lowe, David Mankamyar, Lamartine Hood, Rep. William Lloyd, Robert Brown, Robert Antram, Harold Ott, and Harvey Manbeck.

construction.

"We have quite a lot of confidence that it will work," he said. However, according to Manbeck an infrastructure must be develop-

ed. In other words, from the forests to the manufacturers and builders using lumber products, it must be realized there's a market waiting for Pennsylvania hard-

wood products. They have excellent construction capability, according to Manbeck.

"We have the potential to create jobs," he said.

Manbeck said that standards are being developed for Glulam lumber products. Testing is being done on them for strength, heat and cold, and waterproofing, he said.

Dr. Larry McCormick, associate professor in the Penn State School of Forest Resources, talked about pear thrips research which began following the 1988-1989 discovery of the harm they were having on sugar maple trees.

Pear thrips are miniscule insects which attack the succulent leaf buds of certain trees, such as the sugar maple. In Somerset County, it has done great damage to these natural producers of the sugar water each springtime, because maple syrup and commodities start with the tree sap.

Because of Penn State forestry and entomology research, McCormick said they have successfully documented information about the thrip's life cycle, potential for damage under certain conditions, and population dynamics.

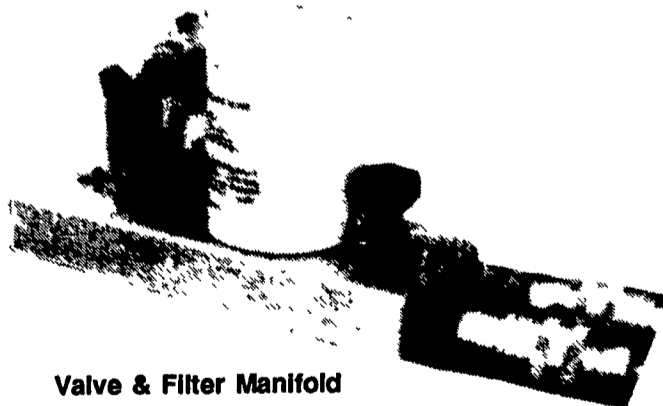
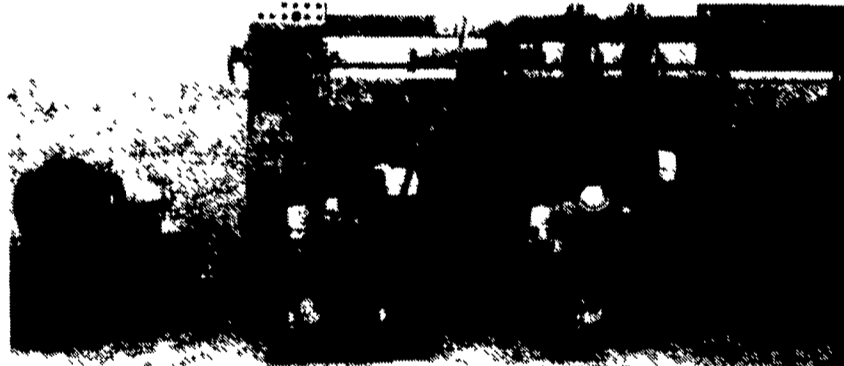
Pear thrips can lower the amount of sugar water produced

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