

# Tech Course Set

ALFRED, N.Y. — This year's "Agriculture Tech Prep 2000" summer course for college and high school educators is scheduled for the campus of Alfred State College of Technology July 26-30.

That's the word from Morris C. Mead, assistant professor in the college's Agriculture and Horticulture Department, who is Ag Tech Prep (ATP) coordinator for Alfred State.

Mead describes the offering as "one of the most ambitious technical programs ever attempted at the state level."

"It targets all school districts in the state with the common message that there are more opportunities in agriculture-related businesses and industries than most of us could possibly imagine," he said.

The specific audience is the middle 50 percent of high school students, those who might be

thinking of college but might not have a clear concept of what it is they want out of higher education, Mead noted.

The ATP 2000 project is funded with a \$250,000 five-year grant to establish a statewide agriculture curriculum that includes mathematics, science, communications, and the technologies for many students who might otherwise not consider an ag-related career.

New York State is the only state in the nation with an Ag Tech Prep program, Mead said.

How does it work? The project will create a new curriculum choice for high school juniors and seniors to prepare them for the next step — a two-year, agriculture-related program at one of the state's colleges of technology.

"Students who successfully

complete the high school courses would be accepted at the College of Technology at Alfred (Alfred State) and at the Colleges of Agriculture and Technology at Morrisville and Cobleskill," Mead said. "The programs they select at the college level would pick up where the high schools left off."

Involved with the five-year project, along with the three colleges, are the following 12 pilot schools where the program will be tested starting this fall:

- Cuba-Rushford Central School, Fillmore Central School, Friendship Central School, and Pioneer Central School (Yorkshire) in the western portion of the state.

- Lowville Central School, Madison-Oneida BOCES, St. Johnsville (Montgomery County)

Central School, and Vernon-Sherrill Central School in the central region.

- And, Greenville Central Junior-Senior High School (Greene County), John Bowne High School (New York City), Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES (Yorktown Heights), and Tri-Valley Central School, Grahamsville (Sullivan County), in the eastern region.

Teachers from the 12 school systems spent the academic year field testing educational materials for the project. Writing teams have been formed to review materials and suggest changes or additions.

Courses under consideration include environmental science, plant and animal science, mechanization systems and structures, managing an agricultural enter-

prise, aquaculture, and food science.

For more information, the following campus coordinators may be contacted: College of Technology at Alfred, Professor Morris Mead (607) 587-4525; College of Agriculture and Technology at Morrisville, Professor James VanRiper, (315) 684-6240; and College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill, Professor John Tyron, (518) 234-5571.



## Safety Vital Around Farm Ponds, Pools

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Farm ponds provide water for firefighting, irrigation, and livestock. During summer, they may even be used for swimming.

If you use a pond or a swimming pool for recreation on your farm, make sure it is safe, said a safety expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Water safety is particularly important if you have children on your farm," said Dr. Dennis Murphy, professor of agricultural engineering. "According to the National Safety Council, drowning is the second leading cause of death in children and youths aged one to 24."

Children under four are at especially high risk. "It takes just an inch of water and a few moments without supervision for a child to drown," Murphy said. "Drowning generally is silent, without a cry for help or a splash to alert adults. It easily can happen in a bathtub, kiddie pool, or your farm pond."

Children always need adult supervision near water. "Consider putting a fence around your pond or pool to keep children from entering the water without adult supervision," Murphy said. "All children and non-swimmers should wear personal flotation devices at all times."

Encourage your children to learn to swim. "You can enroll children over age three in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors," Murphy said. "But keep in mind that lessons don't make your child 'drown-proof.'"

Before letting people swim in your pond, mark safe swimming areas and set up a rescue station. "Keep a strong, lightweight pole 10 to 12 feet long and a ring or tube with a line attached in the pool or pond area at all times," Murphy said. "Also keep a list of first-aid procedures and where to get help in case of an emergency."

Near-drownings are more common than drownings, so preparing for the worst could save a life. "In a crisis situation, basic emergency medical procedures can help until emergency personnel arrive," Murphy said. "It's a good idea to learn CPR and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation if people swim on your property."

Murphy notes that not all farm ponds are suitable for recreation. "Never swim in water shared by livestock or polluted by runoff containing chemicals or animal waste," Murphy said. "Avoid stagnant and algae-filled water, since some algae produce toxins that can cause severe illness and even death. Stay away from ponds during storms and when spillways are flowing."

More information about farm safety is available from the Penn State Cooperative Extension office in your county.

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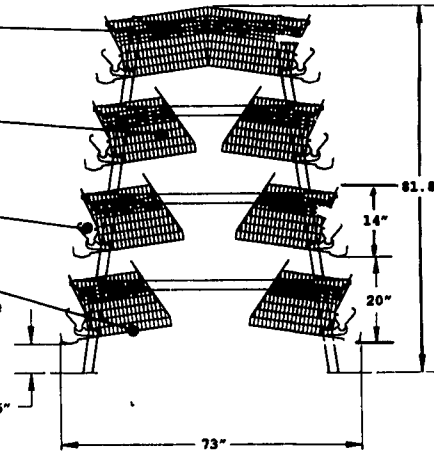
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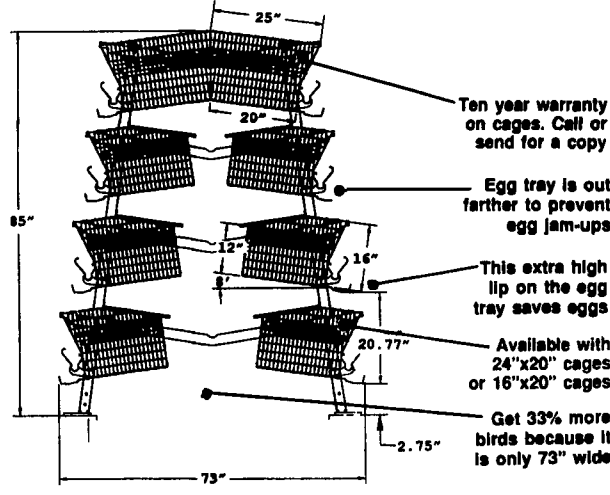
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