

Livestock Pest Control, New Regulations At Ag Progress

ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — Livestock producers and other farmers face a perpetual battle with insects, struggling to protect their crops, their animals, and themselves from these pests.

Increased concern about the environmental and human health effects of pesticides and new federal regulations about pesticide use are leading farmers to change the ways they cope with six-legged invaders.

Visitors to Penn State's Ag Progress Days, August 17-19, can learn about changing pest control strategies by attending pesticide re-certification workshops. At the same time, they can earn two pesticide update credits necessary to maintain their state pesticide applicator certification.

"This is the second year we've offered re-certification credits at Ag Progress Days," said Dr. Winand K. Hock, professor of plant pathology and director of the Pesticide Education Program in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Participants will learn about livestock pest control options and about new pesticide regulations that may affect their operation."

Two workshops will be held each day of the event. Each will feature a formal presentation followed by time for the audience to ask specific questions. Officials will be on hand to register participants and award credits for attendance.

Dr. Charles Pitts, professor of entomology, will discuss controlling pests related to livestock production at 1 p.m. in the College Exhibits Building theatre at the Ag Progress Days site.

"Insects, particularly flies, can

be a serious problem in animal facilities ranging from poultry houses to milking parlors," he said. "We'll discuss how to use existing pesticides properly in order to avoid resistance in flies and other pests."

"We'll also consider alternative control strategies, such as predators and parasites and changing cultural practices such as manure management to help minimize

pest problems," Pitts said. "Finally, we'll survey current research on mechanical pest controls, including vacuum systems that remove pests while leaving beneficial insects."

At 2 p.m., Hock and other specialists from the Pesticide Education Program will discuss the Environmental Protection Agency's new Worker Protection Standard. "Nearly every farm with at least

one non-family employee will be affected by these regulations," said Hock.

Starting April 15, 1994, employers must provide workers with decontamination facilities, pesticide safety training and information, notification of applications and information about pesticides used, clean and safe personal protective equipment, and emergency assistance if required. The rules will be enforced by indi-

dual states through cooperative agreements with EPA.

"These standards are meant to reduce the risk of harm from pesticide exposure for workers who handle, mix, load and apply them, as well as workers in pesticide-treated fields, forests, nurseries and greenhouses. We'll examine the steps various types of agricultural operations must take to comply with the new regulations."

Pasto Museum Depicts Life Before Electricity

ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — Imagine washing your clothes by churning them in a tub with a wooden plunger, getting your milk from a wooden ice box or harvesting grain with a horse-pulled reaper.

Visitors to Penn State's Ag Progress Days, August 17-19, can tour the Pasto Agricultural Museum and get a taste of what life was like before gasoline engines and electricity reached rural America.

The museum houses more than 300 implements from "the muscle power era" of farming and homemaking, which ended during World War II. Items on display range from a 6,000-year-old clay sickle used for grain harvesting, to a 175-year-old mechanized apple peeler, to a turn-of-the-century foot-pedaled milking machine.

Sections of the museum are devoted to harvesting grain, cutting and handling hay, planting and harvesting corn, plowing and cultivating soil and caring for animals. Recently acquired items include a pulley-operated fork for unloading hay from wagons and equipment for cutting and trans-

porting ice.

"Before refrigeration, people harvested ice from frozen ponds and kept it packed in sawdust," said Pasto. "Every home had an icebox for storing milk and other perishables."

The museum also has household items from days past, including devices for washing and pressing clothes. These include primitive wood plungers, slatted metal plungers and scrubbing boards. More "modern" clothes washers are featured, with lever-operated tubs and wringers. A collection of irons for processing clothes includes flatirons, irons with heated inserts, some that burn charcoal and have chimneys and adjustable drafts, and one that is gasoline powered with a tiny carburetor.

"Many of these irons are hand-forged," said Dr. Jerome Pasto, museum curator and associate dean emeritus in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "When you study how intricately they were designed, you can see that someone put a lot of care into making them."

A collection of rug beaters and

sweepers shows how homemakers kept carpets clean before vacuum cleaners were invented. "The forerunner of the vacuum cleaner was a rug sweeper operated by a hand pump," said Pasto. "The suction pump worked much like a set of fireplace bellows in reverse."

Also on display are devices used to separate cream from milk. The collection includes cream-skimming pans used in Colonial times, a turn-of-the-century hand-cranked cream separator, and a 1920s centrifuge cream separator.

The Pasto Agricultural Museum is arranged in chronological sequence to show technological progress. Many artifacts have been restored to working order so visitors can turn the cranks and pull the levers. "I consider the museum a hands-on history book," said Pasto. "There's a story behind every item here."

The museum will be open to the public during all three days of Ag Progress Days. Tours also can be arranged. To schedule a tour, contact the Office of Agricultural Short Courses at (814) 865-8301.



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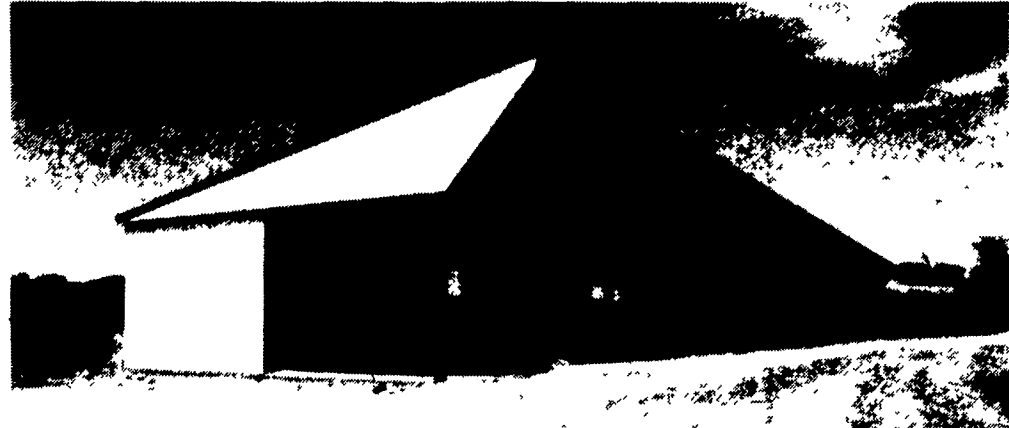
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