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Ag Progress Days were held this week with record crowds on Wednesday. Various educational presentations and tours along with 300 commercial exhibits provided interesting fare for attendees. The annual event has

been located at the research farm since 1968. This scene from on top of the Harvestore silo gives a feel for how the exhibit area appeared from a bird's-eye view. Photo by Vern Achenbach.

German Ag Diplomat: German Farmers Want Free Trade

VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — While visiting Penn State University's annual Ag Progress Days event on Tuesday, Germany's first secretary of agriculture to the German Embassy to the United States said that he wanted American farmers to know that German farmers desire free trade. Hans Christoph von Heyde-

brand, first secretary of agriculture (agricultural attache) at the German Embassy in Washington D.C., said that his country's farmers want American farmers to know that they are undergoing painful cuts in government price support levels, bringing them in line with market demand prices and putting them under financial strain, similar to what American counterparts are experiencing, in

an attempt to create open and free trade with the U.S.

Specifically, von Heydebrand said that he wanted to, "Draw (the) attention of the U.S. farmer to the first major reform of (German) agricultural policy."

According to von Heydebrand, a recently approved policy calls for a 30-percent reduction in all agricultural support prices over the next three years.

He said that reduction comes on top of an already existing 30-percent reduction in grain support prices that have occurred since the mid-1980s. The effect of changes in grain prices has been felt throughout the German agricultural and food industry, von Heydebrand said, and the further reductions are also expected to impact greatly on the nation's agricultural industry.

The German agricultural diplomat, who was visiting Ag Progress Days at the invitation of the group RULE, which stands for Penn State University's Pennsylvania Rural Leadership Program, said the three-year, 30-percent support price reduction is to occur with a first-year, 15-percent reduction followed by smaller reductions over the following two years.

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Fruit Tree Research At Ag Progress Looks At IPM

Infestation, Environmental Data Essential If Growers Reduce Pesticide Use

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — Fruit growers beware. If you're going to cut back on pesticide use through integrated pest management (IPM), you better get the facts about pest infestation, disease thresholds, and weather factors in your orchard.

"The trick is to learn when you can allow a little bit of damage on the leaves and still protect the fruit and reduce the pesticide levels," said Jim Travis, associate professor of plant pathology, during the tree fruit research tour on Tuesday morning at Ag Progress Days.

Travis said that fruit growers should consider scouting not only for insects and disease occurrence in the crop, but understand that timing is critical for application.

As part of their studies, plant disease and pest experts at Penn State are looking into what the threshold levels should be for applying fungicides and insecticides. Also, they are looking at disease-resistant varieties of fruit trees to see how they hold up in fighting fungus disease and what kind of insects they might attract.

In one test, utilizing M-9 dwarf root stock in an apple orchard with a hedgerow trellis system, trees were under attack from an insect called the spotted tentiform leaf-miner. The 7-year-old trees have leaves that bear the signature of the miner, "an insect that makes a 'mine' in the leaf," said Ed Rajotte, associate professor of entomology at Penn State.

A small moth lays eggs on the apple leaf, and a caterpillar

emerges. The caterpillar is so small, said Rajotte, that it's able to go "in between the upper and lower layers of the leaf and makes a little tunnel inside the leaf."

The insect specialist said that if growers have a lot of the leaf miners, "it's going to affect the quality and the quantity of your crop."

Growers should not spray for the miner until there are at least

Ice Cream Churn-Off Brings \$300 Prize

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — Beneath pounding hot sunrays, Elsie Smith and her clan of nine churned their way to success with their homemade ice cream Orange Sicle Cream.

For four years, Elsie and her grandchildren have entered Ag

two mines per leaf. In many cases at the site, only one mine was spotted, which is far from the point where the crop will be harmed, according to Rajotte.

But pesticide sprays aren't always necessary to handle insect infestation in crops. The researchers are looking at biological controls, also, as part of an integrated pest management package. In one

Progress Day's Ice Cream Churn-Off. After a third place standing last year, the clan churned their way to the top and \$300 in cash on Wednesday.

Second-place and \$150 went to last year's first-place winner Harold and Linda Geise of Watson-town for their Very Berry Ice Cream.

case, miniature beetles, called *Stethorus punctum*, are tested in eating the European red mite, a common apple pest.

One of the ways that growers can reduce the current levels of fungicides and get control is through the use of planting disease-resistant varieties. There are several under research, which

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Third-place and \$100 went to Albert Hack of Berwick. It was the first time Albert, who milks 65 Guemseys on his 350-acre farm, entered competition. "I'm always interested in dairy promotion," said Albert, who is a former director of PA Dairy Promotion Board.

Elsie Smith and her grandchild-
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