



Pennsylvania Vegetable Conference Looks At Variety Of Grower Concerns

Biotech Delivers Better Tasting, Longer Lasting Fruits, Vegetables

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HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — It's not enough to develop new vegetable varieties just for variety's sake. More importantly, plant genetic companies must consider how well that crop will hold up under harvest, processing, packaging, and storage conditions, according to a leading plant scientist.

Dr. William Romig, Extended Product Life, Inc., spoke to about 150 vegetable growers about the realities of developing new varieties of fruits and vegetables through the science of plant genetics on Tuesday morning at the 1994 Vegetable Conference and Trade Show at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

New varieties are coming to market everyday, according to Romig, but the processes leading up to their development can be time-consuming and costly.

Fruit and vegetable plant geneticists are looking for ways not only to come up with better-tasting and longer-lasting varieties, but those that hold up well under harvest and storage conditions.

"Consumers would like to have a better-tasting tomato, especially

in wintertime," said Romig.

At one company, DNA Plant Technology Corp., research is under way to turn off the enzyme responsible for the post-harvest deterioration of taste in a tomato variety, and also to allow the tomato to have a much improved shelf life, even 23 days after harvest.

Also, work continues on a sweet corn variety with a genetic makeup that "shuts off" the sugar-to-starch conversion, allowing it to taste sweet days after harvest.

According to Romig, DNA Plant Technology Corp owns a patent on any pepper with less than

20 seeds.

A new pepper variety has been developed that has "considerable consumer appeal," he said, with low seed count, sweet-tasting, and that has good shelf life. It'll soon appear on East Coast grocery shelves under the Vegisweet label, he said.

A sweeter tasting, higher juice carrot under the Vegisweet label also has improved disease and insect resistance. Newer varieties with more juice and longer shelf life will soon appear under the Fresh World Farms label, owned

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At the Pennsylvania Vegetable Conference on Tuesday, awards were presented to area tomato growers at the Tomato Awards Luncheon. From left, James Kohl, Furman Foods, a sponsor of the awards; Cliff Charles, Lancaster, Class 1 Machine Harvest (60+ acres); Harold Wiser, Girard,

Class 2 Machine Harvest (40-50 acres); Nelson Ginder, Mount Joy, Class 3 Machine Harvest (25-39 acres); Marlin L. Cassel, Manheim, Class 4 Machine Harvest (15-24 acres); and Robert MacBeth, Biglerville, Class 2 Hand Harvest (6-14 acres). Photo by Andy Andrews

Interim Criteria Proposed For Nutrient Management

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HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Nutrient Management Advisory Board to the State Conservation Commission has canceled its scheduled Wednesday meeting and is to meet next on March 2, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., in Room 309 of the state Department of Agriculture Building in Harrisburg.

According to Donald Bollinger,

of Kleinfeltersville, who chairs the board, the recent winter storm and the lingering poor driving conditions caused a delay in preparation for the meeting and thus it was canceled until March.

The 15-member advisory board met last during Farm Show week at the Penn State Downtown Center in Harrisburg. The board is aided with staff from the state Conservation Commission, of which Michael Krempasky is its execu-

tive secretary.

During the meeting, the board reviewed a strategy for a nutrient management educational program, among others issues.

Although the state's Nutrient Management Act does not limit the extent or scope of the control to agricultural production operations, the board has concentrated almost entirely on that group.

In a chart that roughly describes the relationships of governmental

officials-to-governed, the highest level agencies involved are the Penn State Extension, the USDA Soil Conservation Service, the DER Bureau of Land and Water, of which Micheal Krempasky is director, and Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

At the middle level, the local extension is to be the educational agency, and the conservation district and local SCS personnel are to fulfill those duties on a one-to-one

basis.

For example, the state Extension, SCS, BLWC, and PDA are to conduct group meetings, provide guidance, and concepts, while the agencies dealing more one-to-one are to make the individual contacts, provide compliance, and also provide the experience to get the information out.

In other news, the state Conservation Commission, chaired by Arthur Davis, DER secretary, published its proposed interim criteria for nutrient management. The interim criteria, while not regulations, "... provide guidance that will be used by the Department of Agriculture to develop the program to certify nutrient management specialists ... (and) provide a preliminary description of the basic components of nutrient management plans."

The commission published the proposal in the Jan. 15 Pennsylvania Bulletin (Vol. 24, No. 3), and comments are to be accepted up until Feb. 14.

According to the Pa. Bulletin, comments are to be sent to Michael D. Krempasky, Executive Secretary, State Conservation Commission, P.O. Box 8555, Harrisburg, 17105-8555.

"Comments must be submitted in writing and contain the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting, and a concise statement of comments, objections or suggestions" on the proposal, according to the statement.

Lancaster County Extension Highlights Services

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — A buffet of the county's bounty greeted extension employees, volunteers, and supporters at the Farm and Home Center on Thursday night.

"We want to show our support for extension services," said Ray Martin of the Lancaster County Pork Producers.

He and Ron Butt, of the same industry, dished up two different versions of fresh ham with specialty sauces that were served to guests during the social hour.

Other buffet specialties donated by local commodity groups included baked potatoes with toppings, egg omelets made to order, hot dogs, ice cream sundaes and punch, fresh and dried apples, cider, cheese, fresh vegetables, and a variety of snack foods.

Dr. John Schwartz, director,

recapped the Extension services completed this past year. These included publishing 199,981 newsletters and publications, providing individual help to 30,213 individuals, holding 5,521 meetings with 57,096 attendance, assisting 729 volunteers, teaching 4,113 4-H members how to complete 5,407 projects, providing three daily radio programs and five weekly newspaper columns.

Dr. Donald Evans, assistant dean from Penn State, commended the staff for their outstanding services. He said that Doris Thomas, who is retiring after 30 years as extension home economist, is an example of the longevity of the staff that provides an environment for good educational opportunities.

Zoann Parker, 4-H and exotic animal agent, received the national 4-H distinguished award for her

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Commodity groups dish up the county's bounty during the annual Lancaster Cooperative Extension meeting. Here, Poultry Queen Melissa Stauffer, left, and Alternate Mindy Dullo flip an omelet for Dr. John Schwartz, extension director, while Pennsylvania Alternate Dairy Princess Marci Harnish, right, offers an ice cream sundae and milk punch.