

Certification Needs Should Be Addressed

SELINGROVE (Snyder Co.) — Farmers wishing to have their farms certified by the Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA) should move quickly to qualify for the 1994 round of farm inspections, according to the president of the state's OCIA chapter No. 1.

The OCIA, with more than 1,700 certified organic farmers in a dozen countries, is the world's largest and best-known certifying organization. The association has two chapters in Pennsylvania, with about 40 farms certified in 1993.

Selingsrove vegetable farmer Tom Beddard, head of chapter No. 1, which covers the eastern half of the state, said that while the OCIA's 1994 inspections will not occur until May, farmers should act now to get their paperwork in order.

"As public interest continues to grow in the areas of food safety and environmental protection, we're getting more and more inquiries from farmers about our organization," Beddard said.

"We welcome as members any farmers, or non-farmers as well, who are committed to the OCIA principles of farming without synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides and managing our soil in a

caring way. On a day to day basis, farmers in Pennsylvania and other areas are demonstrating the wisdom of this approach."

A basic requirement for OCIA certification is that a farm, or the portion of it for which certification is sought, must have been without synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides for at least three years. Certified farms also must follow rigid standards governing the use of off-farm inputs and they must carry out approved soil improvement programs.

"The guiding principle of the OCIA is soil improvement," Beddard said. "Our chapter is eager to enroll farmers who are interested in moving their operations away from high-chemical usage. Once they have converted to a non-chemical approach they can become eligible for certification, which in turn will open their products to new markets."

Farmers in the eastern half of Pennsylvania who wish to learn more about the certification program and its costs should contact the chapter certification chairman, Preston Boop, Route 2, Box 168, Mifflinburg, PA 17844. The western Pennsylvania certification chairman is Braden Young, RD 1, Box 540, Frombell, PA 16123.

Boop noted that all certification

applications, complete with soil test results and other data, must be returned to his committee by early April to qualify for inspection and possible certification.

Boop said that no farm can be inspected for certification until field histories are verified and other pertinent information about each operation is reviewed by the

chapter certification committees. Inspections are carried out by independent inspectors, usually from another state.

Webster Joins Progeny Test Program

DeFOREST, Wis. — Betty Webster, Jamestown, Pa., recently joined the American Breeders Service (ABS) progeny test (PT) program.

The PT program enables test herds, such as the Webster Jersey Farm, to use semen from young, unproven ABS sires. In return, these test herds provide ABS with information about the offspring from these young bulls.

After supplying ABS with this information, Webster will receive compensation for each ABS-PT calf born and for each ABS-PT daughter included on the sire's second USDA summary. This program is unique because test herds have the option to select specific young PT bulls they would like to sample.

The program's goal is to have each progeny-tested young sire graduate the program with a highly-reliable sire summary and give test herds the opportunity to use the most current genetics.

Since genetic evaluations rely on the data supplied by PT herds, ABS screens potential herds carefully before adding them to the program. The Webster herd was selected based on superior management practices, efficient re-

cord-keeping, and accurate animal identification.

Producers interested in more information about the ABS Progeny Test program should contact their local ABS representative or call (800) ABS-STUD.

Waybright Accepts Position

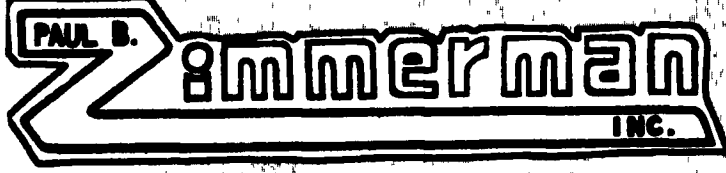
GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.) — Joel Waybright, who has accepted the position of membership chairperson for the second consecutive year of the Adams County Farmers' Association, has announced the membership kick-off campaign has begun.

The kick-off committee held its first meeting on December 29, with a breakfast/brunch at Spangler's Truck Stop. The purpose of the meeting was to gather as many members as possible in the remaining weeks of the campaign.

The Adams County Farmers' Association is a general farm organization with more than 890 farm families. It is affiliated with the Pennsylvania Farmers' Bureau.

"Waybright will be the key person responsible for membership sign-up in our organization for the 1993-1994 year," said President Ed Wilkinson.

"The 1993-94 membership campaign has begun in good fashion and shows immense potential in reaching our goal," said membership chairperson Waybright.



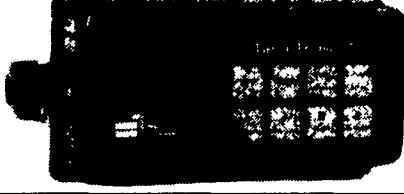
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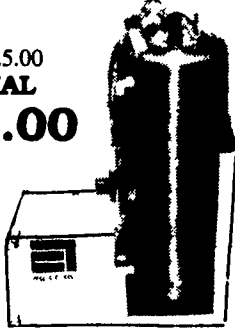
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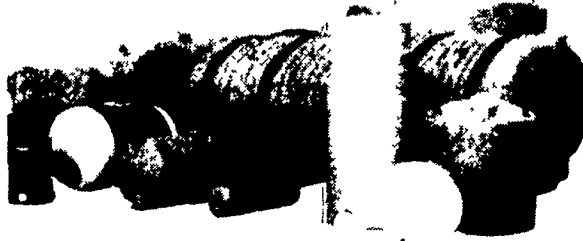
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