

'Waist-High' Soybeans Create Award Opportunity For Berks Farmer

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my success," said Hoffman. "In his time, I considered him one of the top farmers."

Hoffman works about 350 acres, including rented ground, and grows about 125 acres of soybeans and 125 acres of corn. The balance is in wheat and hay.

In 1974, Hoffman quit his job at Philadelphia Suburban Water and went into full-time farming, raising about 1,000 head of beef per year. In 1980, he sold the farm and purchased the current farm, moving in to the farmstead (constructed about 1832) in 1984.

Hoffman farms with his wife, Carolyn. Occasionally, his sons and daughters — Stephen, 31; Wilson C., 26; Christina, 30; and Sarah, 27 — help on the farm.

Hoffman no longer raises beef. His entire operation is cash-cropped.

He attributes the current success to good management and some suppliers, including the work of Bill Cribbs at Moyer and Sons, Souderton; Jeff Patton, the marketing extension agent in Lehigh

county; and John Yocum, contest manager. They helped the soybean grower with soil test recommendations and measuring the yields.

Also, Hoffman recently went on tour of the soybean growing operations in Brazil, where land can be purchased at about \$20 per acre in 10,000-acre plots. He said farmers in this country often find it hard to compete with the Brazilian soybean crop in a country where labor is about \$2 a day.

Hoffman went on the tour through the auspices of the Men For Missions International in January 1993. Hoffman said he learned a great deal about the management practices with the South America growers. Also, he learned a great deal from speaking to tour members from various states, including Colorado, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, and others.

Hoffman, to help him in his marketing, also subscribes to a satellite commodity price service. He has already marketed 100 percent of his wheat and 50 percent of his soybeans for 1994.



Hoffman uses a combination of tillage practices, including about 75 percent minimum tillage (chisel plow and disc) and 25 percent no-till. He said he waits until the soil is dry enough before going into the fields to prevent compaction. Here, he inspects a Vermeer soybean planter.

Wayne County To Start Tractor Club

HONESDALE (Wayne Co.) — The 1994 Wayne County 4-H Tractor and Farm Machinery Safety Certification Program will begin on Tuesday, April 5, at 8 p.m. at the Wayne County Cooperative Extension, Courthouse in Honesdale. Other meeting dates are April 12, April 19, April 26 and May 3.

This 4-H program is designed mainly for 14- to 16-year-old youths who intend to work on area farms this spring and summer. It can also be valuable safety training for others currently operating or working with farm tractors or other farm equipment.

A total of five classroom-type meetings are scheduled for this year's program.

Every 4-H member who completes this project will also receive a "4-H Tractor and Machinery Maintenance and Safety Completion Certificate."

Please contact the Wayne County 4-H Office for additional information. The number to call is 253-5970, ext. 239.

Nozzle Damage From Improper Cleaning

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For backpack sprayers, the same applies for checking nozzle spray area (10 inches recommended) and hoses for even pressure and flow rate.

Most importantly, according to Stoltzfus, applicators should read the label carefully to determine rates. Also, safety precautions, including wearing gloves and eye and lung protection, are necessary

when applying any types of pesticides.

Dan Marini, Zeneca technical sales representative, and Ty Brinninger, Zeneca intern, were on hand to provide information on calibrating pesticide hoppers. Marini emphasized the importance of taking the right steps to ensure safety when applying pesticides. There are also some companies working on completely "closed systems" that will ensure farmers

are kept out of contact with pesticide material.

A demonstration on the free streambank fencing program offered through the district was presented by Travis Martin, conservation technician.

According to Jim Shirk, conservation technician, the three-day workshop provided four core pesticide applicator credits.

Bob Anderson, county crops agent, spoke about a recent pesticide container survey which indicated a few applicators were using discarded pesticide containers for other uses. "That's not the proper thing to do," he said. While many farmers burn the containers, a new program allows farmers to bring the containers to a site for recycling. More details about the program will be available in a few months.

The tour was also conducted at the farms operated by Don Welk in Strasburg Township and at the Ken Zurin farm in Salunga. Next Wednesday, March 30, will be the last time credits will be offered in the county at a Wheat Production Management meeting to be held from 8:30 a.m.-10 a.m. in Lancaster at the Farm and Home Center, according to Anderson.



Ernest Zimmerman, sales representative for Paul B. Zimmerman, demonstrates the use of a flow meter during a sprayer calibration demonstration on Wednesday at the farm of John Zimmerman in East Earl.

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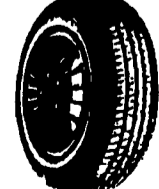
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