

"Ag Progress Days" Set For Draft Horse And Mule Lovers

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From this development, a number of little manufacturers, many of them Amish weld shops on Lancaster County farms, are inventing and modifying machinery to do the job. At the same time, the number of draft horses on smaller farms has grown to increase the market for these horse-drawn implements, but would-be buyers don't know where to find the equipment.

"We're not talking about the old two-row corn planter with a tongue for horses and no provision for fertilizer or insecticide application," Reist said. "Many of the modern horse-drawn equipment makers use three-point hitches and ground-driven hydraulic pumps to raise corn planters, mowers, and plows. With the flip of a lever or the push of a pedal, you can maneuver the equipment in quite modern fashion."

To illustrate the increasing number of draft horses and mules on farms, Ben Nolt at Penn State Uni-

versity quotes Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service figures that show all horse and mule numbers in Pennsylvania alone have more than doubled since 1967. As of June 1, 1990, the latest report, there were 17,400 draft horses and 9,800 mules in the commonwealth.

Of course, many of the draft horse breeds nearly died out after the Second World War, and Reist recalls the time when you could buy a champion at any major show for \$500. But since the early 1970s, the interest has been revived.

"Many of the new draft horse owners in our American association know nothing about horses," Reist said. "Unlike the Amish and other plain people in Lancaster County and other like areas in the nation who farm for a living, these new draft horse owners are often hobbyists — doctors and lawyers who have moved from the city pressures to get back to the earth. They buy small 10 to 20 acre farms

and want to maintain their properties without a lot of expense and have relaxation at the same time."

The American association is an educational organization with ties to all the major breed organizations, and the association sponsors programs where people can learn how to handle horses, how to feed, drive, work, break and physically care for them.

"After we have taught people how to work their horses, their next question is 'Where can we buy machinery to work on our little farm?'" Reist said. "And that's what we hope to do at the Draft Horse and Mule Progress Days. We'll have exhibitors of machinery working in the fields with representatives of manufacturers to tell the procedures of use and maintenance and why the equipment was developed. In addition, we will have five major breeds of draft horses on display with representatives of their registry associations. Belgians, Percherons, Clydesdales, Shires, and Suffolks are to be included. And maybe a Cream can be found. Only about 75 animals in the Cream breed exist in the U.S.," Reist said.

A small entry fee will be charged to visit the Progress Days. Exhibit booth space is somewhat limited, and interest has already come from many parts of the nation. But Reist said other potential exhibitors, or anyone who would like more information about the Progress Days,

may call him at (717) 560-7987 in Lancaster.

If you work with or have an interest in draft horses, mules, or modern horse-drawn farm equipment, you will want to attend the Draft Horse and Mule Progress Days.

Nutrient Management

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According to the bureau director, the flow of applications has been steady since the announcement earlier this year that they were being accepted.

He said that, as of Tuesday, there were 94 applicants approved for interim certification. A breakdown of those approved applicants is 45 commercial people, 38 public service people, and 11 farmers.

In other news, Longenecker told the board that his bureau is in the process of trying to quantify the non-agricultural use of fertilizers, such as on golf courses and in landscaping.

He said he is also trying to get data on the potential use of nutrient chemicals, other than being

intended as fertilizer.

Longenecker said he is trying to quantify such uses, such as using urea for de-icing at airports, and different ammonia-containing compounds in road and sidewalk de-icer formulations.

"Environmentally Sensitive" Is Sensitive Issue

A brief discussion of what considerations and definitions for environmentally sensitive areas might be given in regulation was also held Wednesday, but representatives of a subcommittee studying the issue said they needed more time to review existing regulations by other agencies in order to form proposals that are consistent.

Perspective Outlined

However, perhaps the most telling of the progress the board has made was in a summary statement made by Mike Krempasky, executive secretary to the State Conservation Commission, at the end of Wednesday's meeting.

Krempasky had been asked about how the information the board recommends gets passed on to the commission members, and whether he gives his own recommendations.

In his remarks, Krempasky told the board members that he does give both their recommendations, and his own recommendations.

But further, Krempasky told the board that he and his staff take "very seriously" the issues raised by board members. He said he has a list of 26 specific issues raised by the board and he said, "We are in complete agreement on about 80 percent of them, as far as numbers go."

He gave an example of what kinds of efforts have been going on between meetings to incorporate or resolve advisory board concerns.

According to Krempasky, while board members have continuously requested that flexibility be built into regulations, he said that he has discussed that subject with Dr. Beegle, a Penn State agronomist who has been serving in an advisory capacity.

According to Krempasky, he is working on the creation of a regulatory section that would provide a means for allowing innovation and flexibility.

Dr. Beegle has consistently urged for regulations which are not restrictive in final form, but which must be based on sound, scientific operational principals.

Krempasky also told the board that he is sensitive to the distinctions between manure in a heavily bedded pack and in liquid form.

He told them that they must concentrate on making regulations for mandatory compliance, and worry about voluntary efforts later.

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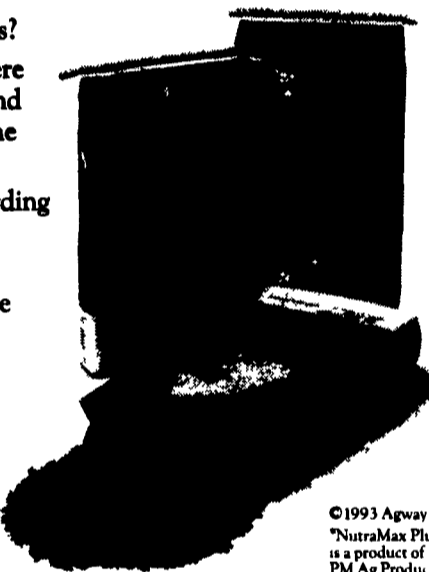
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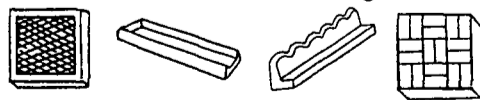
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