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SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION PROPOSED REGULATION CHANGES TO IMPACT POULTRY FARMERS

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) was formed in 1971 to regulate water use in the Susquehanna River Basin. Four commissioners oversee the operations of the SRBC. One commissioner each is appointed by the states of Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania and a fourth commissioner is appointed by the federal government.

The goal of the SRBC is to manage the water supply to insure all users have access to the water they need and to insure a minimum level of flow in the rivers and streams in the basin. The SRBC is especially concerned about consumptive uses of water where water is consumed in an activity and no longer available to be returned to the water supply in the

basin. Agricultural consumptive uses include irrigation and consumption by livestock.

Although consumptive use regulations were in effect since formation of the SRBC in 1971, agricultural uses were largely ignored prior to 1991. Partly in response to the drought of 1991, the SRBC began to seek ways to bring agricultural operations into compliance with the consumptive use regulations.

In 1992, an agricultural advisory committee was formed by the SRBC. This committee developed some recommendations which were presented to the commissioners in 1993. The commissioners rejected both the agricultural committees' recommendations and a separate proposal developed by the SRBC staff members. Since that time the SRBC staff have developed regulation changes which are designed to increase agricultural compliance.

Under these new regulations, any consumptive user of 10,000 gallons per day will be required to register with the SRBC. Any user

of 20,000 gallons per day would potentially be subject to water use fees, application fees, and annual monitoring fees. A poultry operation with 290,000 layers or 590,000 broilers would use approximately 20,000 gallons per day.

If an operation consumes between 20,000 and 100,000 gallons per day, the operator could be exempt from application and monitoring fees if the operator applies for a general use permit. This would require payment of a water use fee of seven cents per 1,000 gallons consumed. For a

dairy which uses 20,000 gallons per day, this would total \$511 per year.

This water use fee is one half the rate paid by other water users. If an operator consuming 20,000 gallons per day chooses to apply for a permit, the operation would be subject to an initial application fee of \$750, and an annual monitoring fee of \$100, and would either choose to pay the water use fee of seven cents per thousand gallons or develop an alternative water supply to be used during low flow periods which occur during dry weather.

A number of public hearings have been held to receive public comment on the proposed regulation changes. A final hearing will be held on July 14 at 1:30 p.m. at the Tidewater Inn, 101 E. Dover St., Easton, Maryland. Written comments will be received until August 1.

If you would like to submit written comments, send them to Richard A. Cairo, General Counsel/Secretary, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, 1721 N. Front St., Harrisburg, PA 17102-2391.

Beekeepers Swarm To Lancaster For Conference

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — When you bite into a ripe, juicy apple, you probably don't give much thought to bees. But maybe you should. Without bees, fruits and vegetables would be less plentiful and more expensive. You can learn more about bees and how they affect our lives by visiting the Willow Valley Family Resort in Lancaster, July 13-15. That's the site of the 1994 Eastern Apiculture Society (EAS) conference. The annual event is expected to draw as many as 500 commercial and hobby beekeepers from as far away as Canada and the Carolinas.

"Honey bees pollinate about \$20 billion worth of crops in the United States each year," said Maryann Frazier, EAS president and extension entomologist in Penn State's College of Agricul-

tural Sciences.

"About one-third of the food you eat is produced with the aid of honey bees," she said. "Pennsylvania apples, for instance, are about 95 percent dependent on honey bees for pollination."

"In addition, about 250 million pounds of honey worth \$200 million are produced in the United States annually."

Although the EAS conference is intended primarily for beekeepers, who must pay a registration fee to attend, free activities are planned for the public.

"On Thursday and Friday, we will have a honey show that's open to the public," Frazier said. "Visitors can sample different types of honey and see some of the many uses of beeswax."

The public also can see a presentation called "Dancing with the Bees," by Cliff Wright-Sunflower, a beekeeper known for his

innovative school educational programs. The audience will learn how a honey bee colony functions by participating as members of a working hive in this entertaining and educational program, July 14 at 11 a.m.

Sessions designed for registered conference participants will address issues and opportunities that affect bees and beekeepers. One presentation will cover apitherapy, or the use of bee venom to treat physical ailments.

"There's a lot of interest in apitherapy for the treatment of diseases such as multiple sclerosis and arthritis," said Frazier.

Workshops and seminars also will cover Africanized bees, parasitic mites, honey quality assurance and other topics. For more information, contact Maryann Frazier at (814) 865-4621 or Joe Duffy at (717) 885-1681.

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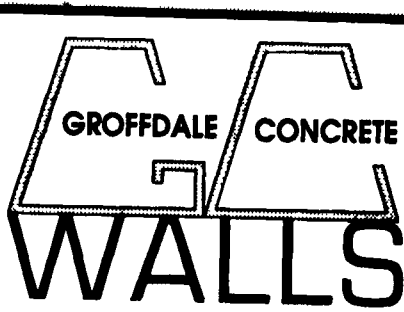
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