

District Responds To Heavy Stormwater, Erosion Complaints

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)
— A combination of very heavy rains — and soils already waterlogged from heavy snow and a wet spring — have caused soil erosion and silt deposits in many fields, backyards, and roads in the county.

As a result, the Lancaster County Conservation District has answered more than a 100 complaints from concerned homeowners and farm neighbors about silt and soil on properties and roads.

Although conservation plans have been designed and implemented to take care of 10-year type of storm events, the county has already experienced some 25- and 50-year storm events. Simply put, those kinds of sudden downpours, ranging from 2.5 inches to 3 inches of rain in an hour or less, happen, on average, every 25 to 50 years.

But one recent downpour near Kirkwood was a 100-year event, depositing more than three inches of rain in an hour.

"When you get three inches of rain in an hour, especially in fields that are newly tilled, you might get erosion, even with the best of terraces," said Don Robinson, manager of the district. Conservation practices work well, in place with good crop cover, for 10-year events.

"We have been inundated with calls from homeowners complaining about the water," said Robinson. "Half of the calls have been related to stormwater."

The district does not have jurisdiction over stormwater, said Robinson. Local municipalities deal with stormwater complaints.

Robinson said farmers and homeowners should realize that they must work together to solve problems of soil erosion and retention. But water will flow downhill, and homeowners need to be aware of this, especially if they live downslope from open farmland.

Under the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law, landowners must comply with regard to any type of "earth-moving" activities. A farmer is exempt from any permits in plowing and tilling, but must comply in the event of "an accelerated erosion problem impacting the waters of the commonwealth" as defined by the streams law.

Lancaster is one of seven counties with a Level 3 enforcement authority. This means they can assess fines if farmers don't comply with the conservation plan.

The district office wants farmers to realize that they will endeavor in every way to work with farmers "to help implement a conservation plan to prevent storm erosion events from happening in the future," said Robinson.

Farmers should be aware, according to Robinson, that cost-sharing is available to implement a plan. Cost-share can take care of up to 75 percent of the total costs.

Robinson said he received a call earlier this week from a farmer complaining that even though another farmer, who works upslope, has a conservation plan,

stormwater caused gullies in the neighbor's field. If the two farmers work together, both can solve the problem, and both could qualify for cost-sharing.

A few farmers, said Robinson, are becoming belligerent and just won't comply. After a time, the district may be forced to exercise their Level 3 authority and level fines — which can amount from a

few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars, said Robinson.

Some of the problems, in fields that never had erosion problems before, are the result of an aggravated condition caused by heavy rains, followed by heavy rains in the spring, and then even more rain in the summer. On many farms, there are less hay fields and grain cover crops to help cover and

retain the soil, and more corn following corn.

Some of the major problems with stormwater could have been avoided if farmers would consider putting in 10-15 foot wide buffer strips (along roads that are downslope of cultivated fields) that do a lot to help retain soil. This "common sense" strategy, said Robinson, "is part of the answer to solving these things."

Boar Tops \$975 At Sale

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — An individual boar from a "record-setting" pen of boars returned the top price of the day during last week's Pennsylvania Performance-Tested Boar Sale at the Ag Arena during Penn State's Ag Progress Days.

The top-indexing individual boar sold to Kenneth Jones of Danville for \$975. The lot #3 boar from the same pen sold for the third highest price of the evening sale, selected by James Mathis for \$675. The second highest-selling boar was the Yorkshire from Keith Bard's pen, selected by Charles Hall for \$775.

According to Glenn Eberly, director of the Meat Animal Evaluation Center, there was a relatively modest, soggy crowd in attendance (several inches of rain fell during the day and evening).

"The sale started off with a testament to the value of performance testing," said Eberly. "The top-

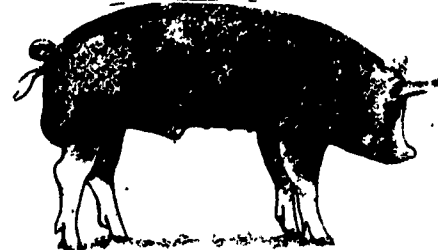
indexing pen of boars that had been consigned by Charles and Mark Hall of Julian were sons of the top individual indexing boar they had purchased in last year's Performance-Tested Boar Sale."

The 12 Yorkshire boars sold averaged \$519. The six Durocs averaged \$421. The top-selling Duroc was the lot #12 boar, bred by James Parlett. The boar was purchased by Kenneth Jones of Danville for \$550. The second highest selling Duroc was the lot #4 boar consigned by Smith's Hog Farm. This highest gaining and indexing Duroc sold to Rattlesnake Mt. Farm for \$500.

The top-selling Hampshire boar was the highest indexing Hampshire boar bred by Chambers Hog Farm. The very lean boar sold to Michael Beach of New Enterprise for \$525.

"In retrospect, the sale was very successful, especially in light of the depressed hog market," said Eberly.

For more information about the swine testing programs, contact Glenn Eberly, Director, Meat Animal Evaluation Center, 651 Fox Hollow Rd., State College, PA 16803, (814) 238-2527 or (814) 865-5857 to leave a message or send a fax.



OVERWEIGHT?

TIRED OF TRYING THE "DIET OF THE WEEK?"

WE CAN HELP! Stop throwing away your hard earned money with gimmicks and start a new, healthful lifestyle by ordering our **LIFESTYLE INSTRUCTIONS** — the easiest way to lose weight and keep it off. You'll be able to eat well, feel better and enjoy all-around better health! Hundreds of thousands of people have already benefited from the techniques of this program. Dial 1-800-991-LIFE day or night. Only \$29.95! Nothing else to buy. Results guaranteed or we refund everything! VISA and MasterCard accepted.

— by ADVANCED LIFESTYLE SOLUTIONS, a MACS COMPANY —



Let Your Crops Dine On Alpine

The Company That Offers You High Quality Plant Food At Competitive Prices

Talk To Us About Seed Banded Plant Food And Follar Feeding

Place Phosphorus Where It Does Most Good (Seed Banded)

6-24-6 9-18-9 3-18-18 5-15-15
Check Early Order & Quantity Price

Zimmerman Lime & Fertilizer, Inc.
(717) 733-7674

235 W. Burkholder Dr.

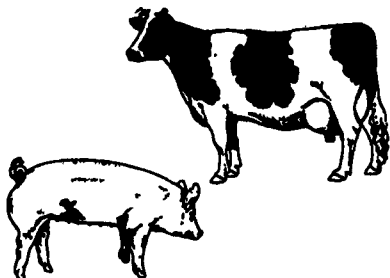
Lititz, PA 17543

Problem Water?

Odor? Bad Taste? Stains? Iron? Manganese? Mineral Buildup? Color? Bacteria? Virus? Harmful Micro-organisms? Hydrogen Sulfide? THM Precursors? Other Contaminants?

Do You Have Any Problems With:

- * Scours
- * Digestion
- * Mastitis
- * Breeding
- * Small Litter Size
- * Too Much Medication
- * Milk Production
- * Poor Feed Efficiency
- * Algae in Drinking Cups
- * Bad Conception Rate



Could Water Be Your Problem? Complete Farm Water Treating System

A Farm Water System that is designed to clean the water on your farm with one of nature's most powerful purifying agents — Condensed Oxygen (Ozone).

OREGON
WATER CONDITIONING INC.

335 Quarry Rd., Lewis, Pa. 17840
717-656-8380

Are You Prepared... For the Harvest Season?



At harvest time your farm and equipment need to be operating at full potential. Sudden weather changes, an equipment failure in the field, or delayed supplies can be costly and need an immediate response.

More and more farmers are discovering the efficiencies. MOTOROLA two-way radio offers Durable, compact and clear communications are quickly at your control.

So don't get caught in your busy season without the farmer's friend TWO-WAY Radio.



TRIANGLE COMMUNICATIONS INC.
New Holland Reading
(717) 856-2211 (610) 929-4211
1-800-828-7718



We Keep Business Talking

REAP YOUR COMMUNICATIONS SAVINGS. NOW.