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Pennsylvania County Agents Name Officers

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — The Pennsylvania Association of County Agricultural Agents announces the election of new officers. Dave Filson was elected president, Phil Durst, president-elect, and Laura Watts, vice president. In addition, Toni Bilik and Carol Schurman were elected secretary and treasurer respectively.

PACAA is an organization of 110 Penn State Cooperative Extension agents from all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. PACAA is affiliated nationally with associations from each of the 50 states. This is the 75th anniversary year of PACAA.

Filson began his Extension career in 1984 and is now the County Extension Director for both Mifflin and Juniata counties. His program area is agriculture with a special interest in agronomy and

dairy. He has served PACAA on the Communications and Scholarship committees and was a regional director for the association. He completed terms as vice president

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Get Back Your Milk Assessment Money If...

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.

Lancaster Farming Staff

NORTH CORNWALL (Lebanon Co.) — While it is expected that some confusion may linger with the name changes of some of the agencies within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there should be no confusion among dairy farmers about how to get back the federal milk assessment

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The Pennsylvania County Agents Association elected officers for 1995. They are, from left, Carol Schurman, Indiana County; Larry Yager, Adams County; Toni Bilik, Blair County; Phil Durst, Montour County; Laura Watts, Cumberland County; and Dave Filson, Mifflin County.

Vegetable Conference Research Examines Stake System, Transplants, Planters

Stake System Provides Better Tomatoes, Income For Growers

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff

HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — Fresh market tomato growers who stake their plants can benefit from larger, firmer, more uniform fruit and obtain a higher percentage of grade 1 tomatoes, according to an expert from North Carolina State University.

Dr. Douglas Sanders, extension specialist with the North Carolina State University at Raleigh, presented information about staked tomato plant research to a roomful of vegetable growers on Tuesday at the 1995 Pennsylvania Veget-

able Conference and Trade Show.

Studies examined the practice of staked tomatoes used by North Carolina, Florida, and other fresh market tomato farms in the Southeast.

Sanders said there are lot of benefits to having a staked plant, including easier pruning, more fruit, less sunburn, and more uniform plants. Also, by incorporating drip irrigation and plastic mulch, fruit harvest can reach as high as 80 tons per acre, according to a system used in North Carolina.

North Carolina has a similar, but earlier, growing season compared

to Pennsylvania.

The staked tomato systems use a form of trellising, much like grape growers. Stakes made up of Honduran pine, measuring about 3/4 inch to 1 inch wide and about four feet tall, are driven into the ground about 8-12 inches deep. A system used by Florida growers uses a pneumatic hammer to drive stakes between every tomato plant. Spacing is every 24 inches.

A North Carolina system uses stakes every two plants, with a spacing of 18-20 inches between. The system uses a regular sledgehammer because the pneumatic

hammer often breaks the stakes.

(When storing the stakes, which can last from 3-5 years, it is important to clean and stack them and treat them with antifungal and antibacterial agents to control disease.)

Every 100 feet, a double stake is inserted at each end to support the trellising method. About 3 to 5 rows of string is used, either vinyl or plastic twine (binder twine is not used because it stretches too much when wet). About 40 plants are accommodated with the trellising method every 100 feet.

In the Florida system, the twine

is moved through the stakes, wrapped around, and tied. Workers who tie the trellises are trained to tie the tomatoes at normal walking speed.

The North Carolina and Florida systems prune once, taking off suckers measuring no more than 4 inches long, before the plant reaches 12 inches high (pruning later than that has little effect on tomato yield). "It's critical to prune early," said Sanders.

When the plant is completely trellised, before tomato harvest, the canopy should fill so when you

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The 4-H family of Ted and Mary Balzano from Cambria County have a room full of trophies to show for their efforts. From left, Cousin Shannon McCloskey, and Bobbe-Jo, Ryan, and Paul Balzano. See their story on page B14. Photo by Loretta Golden, Cambria County correspondent.

Fruit Grower, Ag Lender Honored In York County

JOYCE BUPP

York Co. Correspondent

YORK (York Co.) — Hard work, meditation and a goal to fight for sums up the philosophy that made long-time York County fruit producer P. Joseph Raab a success.

Raab and his family were honored with the farm family award presented annually at the York County Agriculture Recognition banquet. The eighth annual dinner event was held January 26 at the Wischaven Social Hall, jointly

sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service, York County Farmers' Association, and York County Chamber of Commerce.

At age 14, Raab went to work at the Yoe Orchard Company. He later furthered his education with studies at Thompson Business School in York. In 1935, he purchased the family fruit and farming operation from his parents, becoming the fifth generation on the original 40 acres acquired in the 1700s by Peter Joseph Raab.

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Maryland Holstein Assn. Sets Annual Meeting

WESTMINSTER, Md. — The Maryland Holstein Association has announced details for its 1995 convention, to be held March 3-4, at the Comfort Inn, in Westminster, Md.

The deadline to order tickets is Feb. 10, and tickets are required for three meals: the business lun-

cheon, the ladies luncheon, and the convention banquet.

The hotel reservations had a special rate set for the convention, however that ended yesterday. However, rooms may still be available, call (410) 857-1900 or (410) 876-0010, for more information.

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