

Suffered An Injury?

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Automobile accidents are very common. The disabilities can come about from a lot of different places.

There are five basic program areas that AgrAbility covers:

- Information and referral. The program works closely with agencies to provide information about ideas on assistive technology. The information, compiled over a 15-year span, encompasses tractor lifts, one-handed tool use, hand-lever controls, foot controls — all ingenious devices to help the farmer that is disabled maintain an active livelihood.

- Assistive technology. Schaufler provided an example of a woman who operates an apple orchard in Potter County who has a spinal cord disease who is losing the use of her hands and wants to manage a hydroponics facility. This includes using voice control computer systems. But other simpler items include hand controls, solar-recharged electric gate openers, lever controls, and other equipment.

- On-site assessments, including machinery and tool and building accessibility. These include the use of special ramps and accessibility to tractors, trucks, combines, and other equipment.

- Public awareness. This includes communicating with groups such as county farm bureaus, young farmers, and others interested in information on the program.

- Peer counseling. Those who suffered a disabling injury are hooked up "with someone else with the state or within a fairly regional area, that they can talk to, who has gone through maybe some of the same things," said Schaufler. One farmer who had his leg amputated because of diabetes was able to meet and speak with

another who had the same problem. "That made the biggest difference in the world, to know he was going to be able to get back and was going to be able to stay in farming, and to get some ideas on ways to adapt things to make it possible to keep him going," said the project manager.

Schaufler showed a series of slides on some of the devices that are simple to build and use — yet make a big difference in the lives of the disabled.

"A lot of the adaptations that are made for people with disabilities make a lot of sense for everybody," he said. The Americans With Disabilities Act mandated that public sites be equipped with the lever on door handles to allow easy access. Schaufler showed a slide that used inexpensive wire and a radiator clamp on a round door knob that allowed easy access.

For information on AgrAbility, contact your local extension office.



Several producers spoke about the challenges of growing soybeans during a special question-and-answer panel at the Berks Crops Day. From left, Wilson Hoffman, Bally; Robert Tercha, Mertztown; and Jon Stutzman, Kutztown.

Weed Concerns Intensify As Tillage Is Reduced

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growing areas of the state — mostly in the southeast and southcentral counties. A little more than 37 percent of the wells tested in those areas had detections of pesticides, but all were within public safety limits as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Of the 189 wells studied throughout the state, 27 percent of the wells had pesticides in them. Of that amount, 73 percent had a trace of pesticide and only 27 percent had "quantifiable" amounts of pesticide. No health levels were exceeded on any of those that showed pesticides.

That in itself is positive news, according to the Berks County agent.

Most pesticides were detected around application times. Of the total pesticides detected, the majority came from atrazine (41 detections) and 2,4-D (28 detections), according to the study. Other detections included metolachlor (five), chlorpyrifos (four), dicamba (two), simazine (two), alachlor (one), and others.

The detections were infrequent and at low levels. While there is no crisis, Hautau said that certain "vulnerable settings" imply that practices are going on at sites that may not be best for control of levels of pesticides in wells.

"Sometimes, maybe, our best management practices (BMPs) are not the best on these vulnerable sites," said Hautau.

Only problem is, what is a "vulnerable site?"

"We don't have a nice set of rules or guidelines that I can give you that are going to say, these are the things that you should do," said the Berks agent.

In the future, as a result, some management practices may become more conservative and site specific, according to Hautau.

"You are already doing good things. Just please remember to maybe improve practices where you know you need improvement with the handling of these (pesticide) products," she said.

Five-Acre results

Greg Roth, Penn State agronomy associate professor, presented the awards to the five-acre corn club contestants at the Crops Day.

Also, Roth reviewed some of

the management strategies producers could use to obtain high-producing corn silage and reviewed other harvest management techniques.

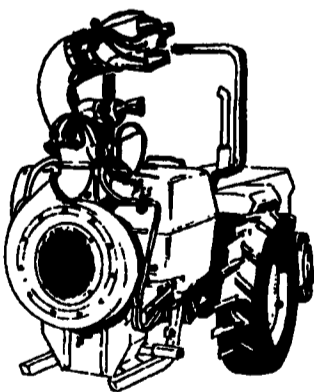
In addition, Clyde Myers, Berks County extension agent, reviewed how important it is for dairy producers to understand forage quality.

"The foundation for any dairy farm is the forages," he said. "Forages are going to make you money."

Myers said that many producers invest heavily in all sorts of harvesting and preparation equipment and don't spend the \$130 or so to get a moisture tester — a simple microwave oven. This helps obtain the dry matter intake amount necessary to calculate a proper forage.

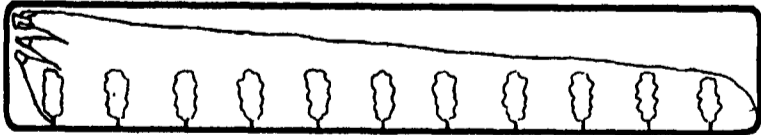
"We better start to enjoy feeding cows as much as we like driving tractors," he said.

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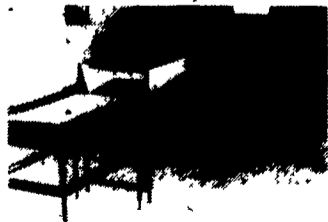
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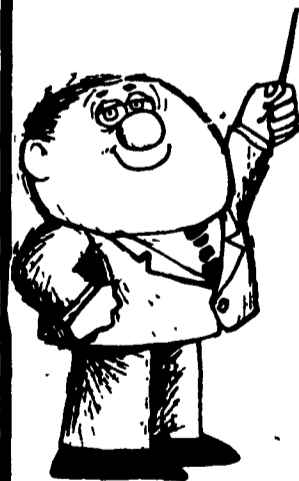
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