Agronomic Field Diagnostic Clinic Set

ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — Penn State again will conduct an agronomic field diagnostic clinic this summer here at the Agronomy Research Farm.

The clinic will be held on two dates, July 23 and 25. The same program will be conducted both days.

These field days are designed to improve the agronomic management skills of industry personnel, extension and public agents, crop consultants, and producers. Specialists from Penn State and the agricultural community will provide hands-on diagnostic training in crop production, soil fertility and conservation, and pest management.

Participants choose from a variety of topics and have ample opportunity to diagnose, solve, and discuss crop management problems and situations. In addition to gaining practical agronomic knowledge, CCA and pesticide applicator license credits can be obtained.

This year's program will be slightly different from past programs. It will primarily focus on some of the new technologies and their applications in crop production; however, some basics will be covered as well.

As in the past, there will be time for discussion and hands-on participation. The program will include sessions on diagnostic techniques for early season corn, soybean nitrogen requirements and inoculation principles, potato leafhopper-resistant alfalfa varieties and management of sclerotinia in alfalfa, herbicide-tolerant crops, uses and economics of Bt corn varieties, and an introduction to yield monitors and their applications.

You are invited to attend one of the field days on Tuesday, July 23 or Thursday, July 25. The cost of registration is $35 and includes lunch, refreshments, and support materials.

Additional program details and registration information will be available from your local Penn State Cooperative Extension office or register by calling Lisa Crytser in the Department of Agronomy at (814) 865-2543.

Please register by July 12 so the department can estimate luncheon needs. For program information, call Dwight Lingenfelter, (814) 865-2242.

Topics include:

• Basics of early season corn diagnostic techniques. Field problem diagnosis and identification are important components necessary for solving crop production problems. Learn necessary techniques needed to effectively diagnose field problems. Information on assessing corn growth stages, seeding depth, plant populations, stand variation and other basic parameters will also be included. Participants will have an opportunity to develop their skills by diagnosing and identifying problems during hands-on exercises intended to bring together these aspects of troubleshooting.

• Soybean nitrogen requirements and inoculation principles. In most production systems in Pennsylvania, no nitrogen is applied for soybean production. We rely on the symbiotic relationship between soybeans and a bacteria species to meet the soybean nitrogen requirements. Learn the proper inoculation techniques and soil environmental conditions that must exist for this process to be successful. In addition, participants will remove and observe plant root/nodule systems in order to better understand this important process.

• Alfalfa pests: out with the old and in with the new. Potato leafhopper is the largest insect pest of alfalfa in the northeastern United States. Learn how and why new technology may cause potato leafhopper to be a pest of the past. Unfortunately, we have a relatively new disease, sclerotinia, that has burst on to the alfalfa scene and is destroying many alfalfa seedings. Learn more about this disease and what can be done to minimize its impact on alfalfa establishment.

• Herbicide-tolerant crops. Herbicide-tolerant crops are increasingly becoming a part of crop production systems. Learn more about the Roundup Ready, LibertyLink, Poast Compatible, IMI, and STS technologies incorporated into corn and soybean varieties. Understand these new crops and how to best utilize them to get optimum weed control and yield. See these new varieties firsthand and learn how they may fit into herbicide resistance management programs.

• Advances in insect pest management. Insect-resistant crops and new insecticide handling systems are a few of the new technologies incorporated into pest management systems. Learn about the new Bt corn technology and issues related to its management and economics. Compare varieties from four companies for controlling European corn borer. See firsthand new insecticide container systems and discuss the benefits. Updates on other insect pests include corn rootworm.

• Understanding yield monitors and their application. Precision, or site-specific agriculture is a hot topic. Learn about this advanced technology and understand the components necessary for operation. Watch a combine yield monitor demonstration and understand how it works. Learn how to interpret yield data by considering soil properties, cultural practices, environmental conditions, and other variables that may have affected yield.

Youth Gear Up For Limousin Show

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Junior exhibitors and Limousin enthusiasts are heading to Des Moines, Iowa July 8-13 for the 1996 National Junior Limousin Show and Congress.

With entries from 237 exhibitors in 26 states, the 446 head entered give the 20th anniversary edition show the second largest number of entries for a National Junior Limousin Show and Congress.

"In the past 20 years, the National Junior Limousin Show has grown from 65 heifers from six states to this year's 400 plus entries from 26 states," said George Hubbard, director of marketing, shows and junior activities for the North American Limousin Foundation (NALF).

In addition to two days of show ring competition, youth will have opportunities to compete in events such as public speaking, sales talk, cattle judging, cow camp, quiz bowl and the 4th Annual Limousin Beef Cook-Off.

For more information on the Limousin breed or the National Junior Limousin Show and Congress, contact the NALF office at (303) 220-1693.

NDB, UDIA Boards Approve New Funding Structure

ROSEMONT, Ill. — The boards of directors governing Dairy Management Inc. (DMI) each voted unanimously to revise the budget structure to equalize opportunities for qualified state/regional promotion organization representation and participation in national dairy promotion plans and programs.

Effective with the 1997 budget, the board voted institutes equal, reduced fees, allowing each state and regional organization greater capacity to voluntarily support and participate in national programs.

The restructuring effectively eliminates mandatory United Dairy Industry Association (UDIA) dues, which were based on each organization's total unified budget and used to fund national programs.

"This is a significant step forward toward unifying the industry," said Bob Gaebe, chairman of the National Dairy Board (NDB) and a dairy producer from New Salem, N.D. "It levels the playing field so all qualified dairy promotion organizations can participate equally and to as great a degree as they desire."

"This decision signals to the dairy industry that DMI programs will be funded equitably and developed with full representation across the nation," said Elwood Kirkpatrick, a dairy farmer from Kinde, Mich., who is DMI treasurer and chairman of an ad hoc committee on DMI funding structure.

"This change was set into motion by the leadership and vision of Elwood Kirkpatrick, who chaired the DMI Budget Restructuring committee," said Tom Gallagher, DMI chief executive officer. "Making these changes removes obstacles and allows the dairy industry to proceed with a long-term strategic planning process that all stakeholders can endorse."

A unified planning process and a focused national plan are key to keeping the dairy industry competitive and helping to build a greater quality of life for dairy producers long term, Gallagher added.

Dairy Management Inc. is a nonprofit organization formed by the National Dairy Board and United Dairy Industry Association that conducts programs in integrated marketing communication, promotion and research on behalf of America's dairy farmers.

Limousin Juniors Celebrate 25th Anniversary Show

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Some 250 exhibitors from 20 states are expected to attend the 20th anniversary National Junior Limousin Show and Congress in Des Moines, Iowa July 13-18.

Returning to the site of the national show in 1976, this year's event will be one of the largest Limousin national junior shows ever held.

"As sit has been for the last 20 years, the National Junior Show is the premiere event for juniors each year," said George Hubbard, director of marketing, shows and junior activities for the North American Limousin Foundation. "Over the years, the number of exhibitors has grown, as well as the educational and competitive opportunities available to the youth involved."

The centerpiece of the week will be the National Junior Limousin Heifer Show on Thursday July 11. Jack Ward of Roanoke, Ind. will put the official placings on the classes, accompanied by associate judge Doug Satree of Montague, Texas. On Wednesday, July 10, juniors will showcase their own breeding programs in the bred and owned heifer and bull show judged by Jerry Talsma, Edgarton, Minn. Doug Satree will also be in the ring Wednesday as judge of the Limousin steer show. As in the past two years, judges for the National Heifer Show and bred and owned shows will be given expected progeny differences (EPDs) on all cattle exhibited.

Outside the show ring, competition promises to be just as fierce. A series of satellite events taking place over the week will offer juniors opportunities in public speaking, sales talk, cattle judging, and a new event, cow camp. Cow camp is a hands-on event that will test juniors' basic skills in cattle management. Juniors an also compete in the quiz bowl and the 4th Annual Limousin Beef Cook-Off.

For more information on the National Junior Limousin Show and Congress or the North American Limousin Junior Association, contact George Hubbard at (303) 220-1693.

Education Foundation On The Road

EDGEWATER, Md. — The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) is putting a new spin on the adage, "if Mohammed won't come to the mountain, the mountain will go to Mohammed."

With a grant of $10,000 from the Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board and matching funds from other commodity organizations, MAEF soon will be able to take an ag products mobile classroom to Maryland school children in grades three, five, and eight.

"They just don't teach much about agriculture in the schools anymore," said Steve Connelly, executive director of MAEF. "We're hoping to reach 30 school sites a year with the mobile classrooms."

The mobile unit will be eight feet wide and 36 feet long with a 22-foot awning to extend for outside activities, "and plenty of signage," according to Bob Keenan, director for the Maryland Education Center for Agriculture, Science and Technology (MECAST), a unit of MAEF. Keenan, who has spent more than 30 years in education, came up with the idea for the mobile units and hopes to have four on the road eventually. There already is an aquaculture unit in service.

"Kids have a hard time getting away from school for things like field trips today," Connelly said. That's because of classroom demands of the Maryland School Performance Action Plan, a series of critical-thinking and problem-solving activities on which children are tested to obtain a school performance ranking.

"The beauty of the mobile units is that we can take everything to the kids without taking them out of school," Keenan said. Teachers who work with the units will have gone through a series of training sessions and students who participate will be prepared by their classroom teachers ahead of time and also have follow-up materials and activities.

"Our ultimate goal is to have teachers who are on sabbatical manning the units at all times," Connelly said. Each unit will stay at one location for one to two weeks.

"The grain unit will deal with all the current traditional agriculture crops and will have an emphasis on nutrition," Keenan said. "The kids will study about global marketing and production and they'll learn more about Maryland's products, too."

There will be end-use product activities such as making tofu from soybeans.

"We will have a series of activities to be done on the unit that requires problem solving and critical thinking that will fit right in with the Maryland School Performance Action Plan," Keenan said. Keenan said he sits down with a group of teachers with whom he can be "perfectly honest," and they design activities and projects.

"I want these teachers to marry agriculture," he said.

When a unit or a project is completed, the students will write a report to the grain board explaining the project.