

# Maryland Ag Department Speeds Up Conservation Grant Payments

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Secretary Lewis R. Riley recently announced that eligible farmers should be receiving their conservation grant payments much sooner under the newly streamlined Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program. The improved turnaround is the result of a move by the State Soil Conservation Committee to eliminate duplication in the MACS program by shifting bond authority for eligible conservation practices from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to MDA.

"What this means is that Maryland farmers will be getting their grant allocations quicker. We estimate that we'll be able to reduce the turnaround time for payments from five weeks to three," said Riley.

In the past, bond fund applications and allocations were processed through (MDE). Beginning July 1, 1996, all unspent bond balances originally handled by MDE will be transferred to MDA.

"What we essentially wanted to do was cut down on government red tape in an effort to make the program more farmer friendly," explained Riley.

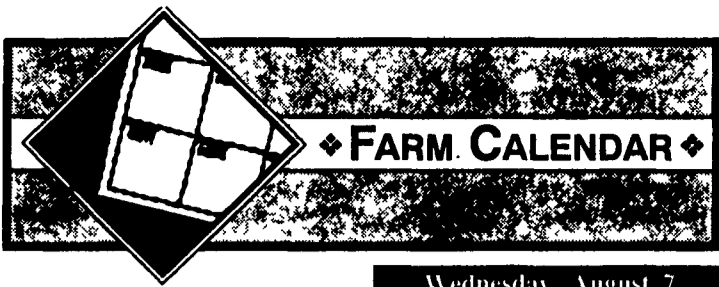
MDA estimates that the changes will also speed up the initial grant approval process. Questions concerning the status of a grant application claim for payment will also be answered in a more timely manner.

Established in 1983, the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share program is a key feature in Maryland's efforts to protect water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Through the program, farmers are provided with a up to 87.5 percent of the cost to install eligible best management practices to prevent soil erosion and control nutrient runoff from farm fields and livestock operations. Grassed waterways, animal waste management systems and stream protection measures are among more than 25 best management practices (BMPs) currently eligible for MACS funding.

Since 1984, more than 7,000 BMPs have been installed under the program with approximately \$38 million in public funds matched by \$4.5 million from individual farmers.

Farmers interested in applying for cost-share assistance through the MACS Program should call their local soil conservation district.



## FARM CALENDAR

(Continued from Page A10)

### Wednesday, August 7

Ohio Processing Tomato and Vegetable Crops Day, OARDC's Vegetable Crops Branch, Fremont.

Ohio Sugar Beet Twilight Tour, OARDC's Vegetable Crops Branch, Fremont.

Carlisle Fair, thru Aug. 10.  
Dauphin County 4-H Fair, Farm Show Complex, thru Aug. 10.

### Thursday, August 8

Butler County Holstein Show, Farm Showgrounds, Butler, noon.

Mifflin County Holstein Show, Reedsville, 6:30 p.m.

Chester County Holstein Field Day, Tim Barlow Farm, Cochranville, 10 a.m.

### Friday, August 9

Northeast Organic Farming Association Annual Summer Conference, Hampshire College, Amherst, Mass., thru Aug. 11.

Frederick County, Md., Pasture Walk, Heirland Farm, Steve and Ruth Ann Derrenbacher, Woodsboro, Md., 10 a.m.-noon.

Clinton County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Mackeyville, 9:30 a.m.

Wayne County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Honesdale, 10 a.m.

Tioga County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Whitneyville, 11 a.m.

Lancaster Holstein Club Field Day, Six Corner Farm, David Stoltzfoos, Leola.

### Saturday, August 10

Pa. Holstein South Central Championship Show, Shippenburg Fairgrounds, Shippenburg, 9:30 a.m.

Md. Holstein annual picnic, Wind-

Churchtown.

Pa. Sheep Producers Field Day, Ag Arena, Penn State, 10 a.m.

Pa. Performance Ram Test Field Day, Ag Arena, Penn State, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Pa. Performance Tested Ram and Invitational Ewe Sale, Ag Arena, Penn State, 3 p.m.

Adams County 4-H Fair, South Mountain Fairgrounds, Arendtsville.

Horse and Pony Roundup, Twin Brooks, 8 a.m.

### Sunday, August 4

Bedford County Fair, thru Aug. 10.

Schuylkill County Fair, thru Aug. 10.

West End Fair-Union County, thru Aug. 10.

Adams County Farm Bureau annual summer picnic, South Mountain Fairgrounds, 1 p.m.

### Monday, August 5

Butler Farm Show, thru Aug. 10.

Cochran Community Fair, thru Aug. 10.

Dawson Grange Community Fair, thru Aug. 10.

Tioga County Fair, thru Aug. 10.

Warren County Fair, thru Aug. 10.

### Tuesday, August 6

State 4-H Achievement Days, Penn State, thru Aug. 8.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers Annual Educational Bus trip to New York state, thru Aug. 8.

Elk County Fair, thru Aug. 10.

1996 Empire Farm Days, Seneca Falls, N.Y., thru Aug. 8.

York County Holstein picnic at David and Norma Lucabaugh's.

Harrold Fair, thru Aug. 10.

Manor Farm, New Windsor, Md., 11 a.m.

7th Annual Summer Plowing Show, Old Time Plow Boys Club, Pa. German Cultural Heritage Center Farm, Kutztown U., Kutztown, thru Aug. 11.

### Sunday, August 11

Washington County Ag Fair, thru Aug. 18.

Bullskin Township Community Fair, thru Aug. 17.

Huntingdon County Fair, thru Aug. 17.

McKean County Fair, thru Aug. 17.

Montour-Delong Community Fair, thru Aug. 17.

Mercer County summer picnic, David Philson Farm, Fredonia, noon.

## Field Trip Aug. 10

READING (Berks Co.) — The Berks/Southeast Cattlemen's Association has scheduled its annual educational field trip Aug. 10 to beef farms in Columbia and Schuylkill counties.

The bus will leave the Berks County Agricultural Center in Bern Township at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday.

Three farms in Columbia County and one in Schuylkill County will be visited to observe operations, which will include a variety of breeds of cattle, feeding methods, spring development, and intensive grazing.

Lunch, which is included, will be at Pennsylvania Power & Light

Company's Monture Nature Preserve and Outdoor Recreational Area on Lake Chillisquaque. There will be a visit to and a lecture about the nature center following lunch.

An evening meal will be included on the way home.

The cost is \$25 for nonmembers. Besides being educational, good fellowship is enjoyed by all and a movie will be shown on the bus.

Please send reservations to Vivian Faust, 201 Chapel Hill Rd., Reading, PA 19608. Include your phone number. Reservations are on a first-come basis. For more information, call (610) 678-9326.

# PRECISE

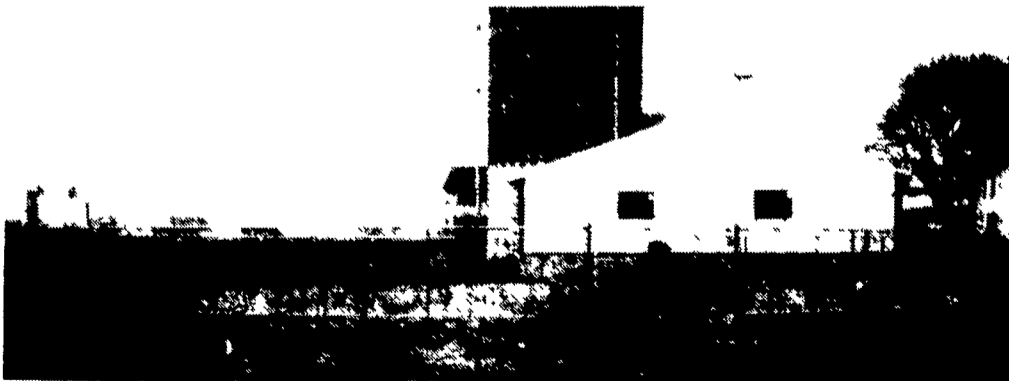
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- 1) Have you ever attended the Lebanon Area Fair before?  
\_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
- 2) Where did you hear about the Lebanon Area Fair?  
Radio (list station) \_\_\_\_\_ Newspaper (list publication) \_\_\_\_\_  
TV \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 10 - 1 being no interest and 10 being tremendous interest.  
4-H & FFA Exhibits \_\_\_\_\_ Food \_\_\_\_\_ Entertainment \_\_\_\_\_  
Animals \_\_\_\_\_ Rides \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial Exhibits \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) If you have visited the Lebanon Area Fair before, what can we improve to make your visit more satisfactory? \_\_\_\_\_