

**PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

*President's Message*

Curt Rakestraw  
President, PMCGA



**WHAT WILL BE THE 1996 CORN CROP?**  
The weather across the Corn Belt this year was anything but uniform. Much of the western Corn Belt saw a dry spring followed by a cool, wet summer. The eastern Corn Belt experienced just the opposite — a wet spring followed by a dry summer. The eastern belt was so wet this spring that much of the corn never got planted until June and some never got planted at all. USDA's August Crop Report predicted a 118.7 bushel per acre national average corn crop and the September crop report predicted a 120.2 bushel per acre average corn crop. If the September report proves accurate, it would be the third highest yielding corn crop on

record! I emphasized the word *if* in the previous sentence because USDA's August and September corn crop estimates have not been very accurate in past years, where a lot of corn got planted late, such as this year. For example, in 1974 USDA's August and September report predicted a 5 billion bushel crop. The actual crop ended up at 4.65 billion bushels. In 1993, USDA's August and September corn crop report estimated the crop at approximately 7.3 billion bushels. The 1993 final crop ended up at 6.3 billion bushels. Even last year, USDA's August and September reports showed a 8.1 and 7.8 billion bushel crop, respectively. The actual crop size turned out to be less than 7.4 billion bushels.

Even if USDA's September crop estimate is correct, we will only add 100 million bushels to next year's corn carryover (which would be the second lowest in history). If USDA has overestimated this year's late crop by anywhere near as much as they've overestimated previous late planted corn crops, we will have the tightest corn supply in history. Prices as I write this do not reflect a tight supply situation. However, corn is still slightly higher than it was last year at this time. USDA's projected national average price is slightly higher for the 1996 crop than the actual price was for the '95 crop — and that's assuming we have a 120-bushel per acre crop! Don't be too surprised if we see a strong rally in prices this winter, followed by another

**Silage Conference To Be Held At Hershey**

HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — Silage production is a key component of dairy and livestock production systems across the U.S. and is especially important in Pennsylvania.

age methods, additives management, mycotoxins and spoilage, silage quality evaluation, and feeding silage.

An upcoming conference, "Silage: Field to Feedbunk," will focus on many of the current silage production issues faced by the silage producers and the livestock industry.

Dairy and livestock producers, consultants, industry representatives, veterinarians, extension agents, and university specialists who work with the silage industry should consider attending this important conference.

The conference will be held at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey Feb. 11-13.

The registration fee is \$160 if received before Feb. 5. Late or walk-in registration is \$190. The fee includes admission to the conference and evening discussion sessions, a buffet lunch on Feb. 12, break refreshments, and a copy of the conference proceedings.

Thirty-five presentations by leading scientists, consultants, and silage producers from around the U.S. will discuss all aspects of silage production and utilization from variety selection to kernel processing to troubleshooting silage feeding problems.

The room rates are \$70 for a single or \$74 for a double if you let the hotel know that you will be attending the conference. Rooms can be reserved by calling (717) 533-3311.

The conference will provide practical guidelines for producers and promote an integrated systems approach to silage production. The session topics are plant and field issues, harvesting a high quality silage, stor-

For a brochure listing the presentation titles and speakers, contact NRAES, Riley Robb Hall, Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, N.Y. 14853 or call (607) 255-7654.

good year in 1997. The PMCGA wishes all of you a prosperous and safe harvesting season.  
Curt Rakestraw

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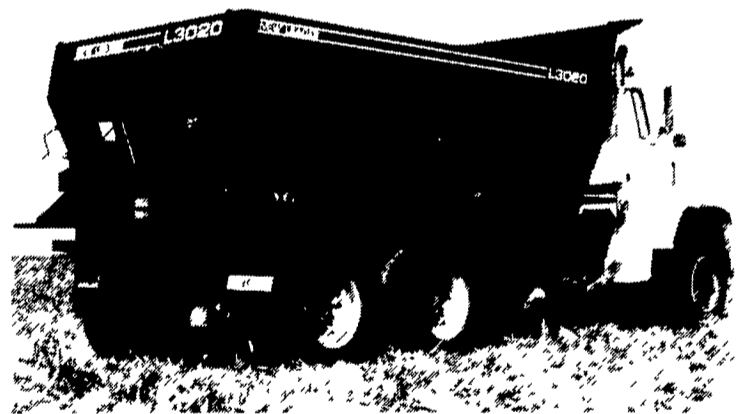
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