



FORAGING AROUND

'Industry, Farmer, Scientist — Working Together Toward A Sounder Grassland Program'



Producer: Get Hay Off Field, Wrapped Quickly

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff

GERMANSVILLE (Lehigh Co.) —

Great baleage starts with getting hay bales off the field and wrapping them at appropriate moisture levels as soon as possible, according to a large-scale hay producer.

David Fink, owner of Heidel Hollow Farm in Germansville, often goes to great lengths to ensure bale quality and consistency — factors vital to marketing any agricultural product, especially haylage, crucial to many feed suppliers and users.

Fink recently spoke to *Lancaster Farming* about some of the new techniques he uses on his farm to manage and bale hay.

Fink has been a member of the Pennsylvania Forage and Grasslands Council for more than 20 years. He is a 1973 graduate of Delaware Valley College in animal husbandry.

Fink, who also serves on the International Market Development Commit-

tee for the National Hay Association, manages 900 acres, all tillable, on the Lehigh Valley farm. Of the 900, 600 acres are in hay, including some alfalfa, mixed hay, and timothy.

Each year, Fink noted, the farm can achieve about three cuttings of mixed hay and about four cuttings of alfalfa. Per year, Heidel Hollow harvests 1,900 acres of hay.

Although Fink makes use of several brands of alfalfa seed, 40 percent of what he plants is Dekalb. New this year to the farm is about 30 acres of oatlage interseeded with alfalfa.

After about five years, Fink noted that alfalfa fields are rotated into Roundup Ready soybeans, double-cropped. The remaining 200 acres are in corn, all of which is fed to the hens.

Heidel Hollow is home to 20,000 hens, producing about five million eggs per year. Those table eggs are packaged on site and are marketed directly to area stores and restaurants.

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Waste Water Rich In Corn-Growing Nutrients

GAIL STROCK

Mifflin Co. Correspondent

BELLEVILLE (Mifflin Co.) —

Participants at a rotational pasture management field day learned about a win-win situation at Plum Bottom Farm near Belleville and momentarily forgot about low milk prices and less than optimal corn yields.

The event featured long-term sustainable pasture production in an intensive grazing system and was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), Fairmont Foods, Mifflin County Cooperative Extension, the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council, Golden and Associates and Plum Bottom Farm, an Ayrshire farm owned by John Rodgers.

The win-win situation? Irrigating pastures with biologically-friendly waste water, or sludge, from Fairmont Foods, a nearby food processing plant.

"The challenge for Fairmont Foods is how to dispose of its manufacturing by-products. The challenge for farmers is how to provide extra water to

crops when liquid from the sky is limited," said Dave Filson, Mifflin County's extension director, as he addressed the crowd. "These challenges become opportunities when environmentally sound waste water becomes a nutrient utilized by plants for growth."

Filson said the same opportunity exists with other food manufacturers. For example, farmers can work potato peels from a Mifflin County potato chip manufacturer into soil deficient in organic matter. The fully organic, nontoxic potato by-product can help build the tilth of the soil, once again providing an opportunity for both the manufacturer and land owner.

But the system needs one more ingredient to make it work — good management. Can the manufacturer generate the by-product on a regular basis? What if it rains continuously for a period of time? What about tire compaction on pastures? Will the farmer know the analysis per load? Will the

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Irish Scientist To Speak At Grazing Conference

GRANTVILLE (Dauphin Co.) — Sinclair Mayne, a scientist at the Agricultural Research Institute of Northern

Ireland, will be the keynote speaker at the Pennsylvania Grazing Conference at the Grantville Holiday Inn, March

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❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Friday, November 14

Preserving Crop Biodiversity and Saving Seeds in the Northeast, Toftrees Resort and Conference Center, State College, thru Nov. 15.

Tuesday, November 18

Quality Forage Conference, Shadowbrook Inn, Tunkhannock.

Thursday, November 20

Grazing Through The Seasons, Lehigh County Ag Center.

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Saturday, January 10

Pennsylvania State Farm Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, thru

Jan. 15.

Friday, February 6

PASA Conference, University Park, thru Feb. 7., contact PASA, (814) 349-9856.

Wednesday, March 4

Pennsylvania Grazing and Forage Conference, Grantville Holiday Inn, Grantville, thru March 5. PFGC Annual Meeting and Awards Reception during Grazing Conference.

Sunday, March 8

American Forage and Grassland Conference, Indianapolis, Ind., thru March 10.

Lancaster Farming

Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland Council
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