

Grain Seminars Set

WILLIAMSPORT (Lycoming Co.) — Central Susquehanna Grain Marketing Club and Penn State Cooperative Extension presents the 1998 Grain Marketing Winter Seminars.

Plan to come out and join with neighboring grain producers to learn how to maximize your profit margin when you buy and sell grain. Speakers from industry and two universities will be helping us to answer the following questions: What local and global factors affect price? How can I learn to anticipate price moves? How do futures and options play a part in my price planning? Should I have a brokerage account? How can I use all this knowledge to my benefit?

The following seminars are offered to grain marketers looking to increase their level of understanding on this important subject.

• Thursday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Kevin McNew from the University of Maryland will be coming in to explain further the concept of basis — what it is, why it is important to us, how it changes over time, and how to use it to our advantage. He will also

add to the prior seminar with a discussion on the practical use of futures option trading. And as a side note, he agreed to make some comments on the work he was involved in that tracked the performance of market advisory services compared to price for corn and soybeans.

• Thursday, March 5, 10 a.m. to

noon. Lou Moore will join with us to discuss grain marketing from the bigger picture. Lou is known for his market outlooks and he will talk about what influences the market price and how you can work to understand those factors and learn to use them to your advantage. Although we generally sell locally, price is influenced by world events. Learn why that's

important to you.

The meetings will all be held at the Bonanza Restaurant/Comfort Inn at New Columbia. The restaurant is located just south of I-80 on Route 15 in Union County. It will be held in the Union Room. Seating is limited and will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Registration cost is \$5. Lunch Dutch treat at the adjacent Bonanza Restaurant.

For more information or to reserve a seat at one or all of the sessions, call Tom Murphy at the Lycoming County Extension office at (717) 327-2350. Reservation deadline is five business days prior to each meeting.

Berks Crops Day Jan. 30

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Specialty corns, emerging technologies in corn production, and grain quality are the headline topics to be presented at the Berks County Crops Day, Jan. 30 at the Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, according to Mena Hautau, extension agent.

Dr. Greg Roth, Agronomy Department, Penn State, said that

there are many exciting innovations in corn production. He will present a discussion regarding various corn types, such as high oil corn, leafy type, and low phytase corn. Precision agriculture and biotechnology are technologies that may or may not be adopted in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Rick Stehouwer is a new faculty member in agronomy, Penn

State, and is responsible for research and extension in environmental soils. He will be updating producers on the new regulations regarding sludge application.

Other topics include a tax law update by the new farm management extension agent serving Berks County, John Rutherford. A weed management update will be presented by John Yocum, man-

ager of the Southeast Pennsylvania Research and Extension Center and nutrient management will be covered by Don Reinert, Berks County Conservation District.

Registration cost is \$4. Registration information can be obtained by contacting Penn State Cooperative Extension-Berks County, PO Box 520, Leesport, PA 19533-0520, (610) 378-1327.

Vegetable Day Speakers Encourage 'Store-Door' Relationships

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Elkner reviewed the results of a sweet corn variety trial conducted at the Penn State Extension Landisville Research Station last summer to examine 30 different varieties to look at several factors, including standability, ear quality, tipfull, and taste.

The corn was planted on a "staggered" schedule so that different varieties would become mature at approximately the same time. The planting dates were to bring fully mature ears to harvest in time for a special taste-test twilight meeting at the research station in August.

Overall, growers offered their opinions on the "tastability" of the corn. Preferences varied. But corn "taste" overall is affected by the number of cloudy days in the season (sweet corn prefers lots of sun) and other elements.

Some varieties offered a "creamier" taste, while other growers preferred varieties that were mostly sweet. Elkner pointed out that it is important to know your customers and what they would prefer. If trying new or experimental varieties, plant them in small lots with caution.

Although the best "taste test" is conducted with raw corn picked right out of the field, Elkner noted that the taste test is conducted with cooked corn because that is the way it will be prepared by the customers at home.

Elkner also reviewed the results of a study involving 14 different varieties of pumpkins at the Landisville site. Overall, there were some surprisingly good varieties that withstood tough drought conditions in the summer with some good yields.

Also at the Vegetable Day, Bob Berghage, assistant professor of horticulture at Penn State, spoke about new varieties of bedding plants available to the grower.

Berghage said the best petunias he has ever seen are the "Wave Series" from Pan American. The "Purple Wave" variety is the 1995 All-American Series winner. The petunias hold up well after rainfall (what horticulturalists refer to as "storm recovery"). In all, Berghage reviewed 35 different plant species for the use in the home garden.

The Vegetable Day offered other sessions on cover crops for vegetables, apple rootstocks, biological and chemical pest control in greenhouses, vegetable disease problems, pollination concerns, fruit tree fertility, vegetable research and promotion, managing vegetables under stress, early season production of vegetables, managing bumblebees in the greenhouse, sprayer coverage, what's new in weed management, greenhouse tomato production, the basics of trickle irrigation, and plastic mulch disposal and water rights.



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