

# Volunteer Corn Could Pose Challenges

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for broadleaves and grassy weeds. Yocum told growers to be aware of crop rotational restrictions.

He noted some harvest aids to help with late control of weeds before harvest. They include Roundup Ultra 45 from Monsanto and Gramoxone Extra 2.5S from Seneca.

Some growers noted troubles with controlling burcucumber. For treatment, Yocum recommended using a no-till strategy with applications of Exceed and Atrazine postemergence to give season-long control.

## Sludge As A Nutrient Tool

Dr. Rick Stehouwer, agronomist with Penn State, said that quality sewage sludge has more nutrient value for field crops than ordinary manure — if people can just get past their preconceived notions of what sludge really is.

In one example, sewage sludge can be applied based on an agronomic need value of 135 pounds of nitrogen per acre. The sludge has a value of 70 pounds of nitrogen per ton (seven pounds inorganic, 63 pounds organic, with 40 percent mineralization the first year).

Sludge supplies 50 pounds of phosphorous per ton and has a calcium carbonate equivalent value of 50 percent (treatment plants apply a lime slurry).

Savings can amount to about \$117 per acre in combined value of all nutrients, including micronutrients, for the soil, if a producer wants to apply the material. Prob-

lem is, there are tight regulations about the official quality of the sludge, how it is applied, when it can be applied, and other restrictions.

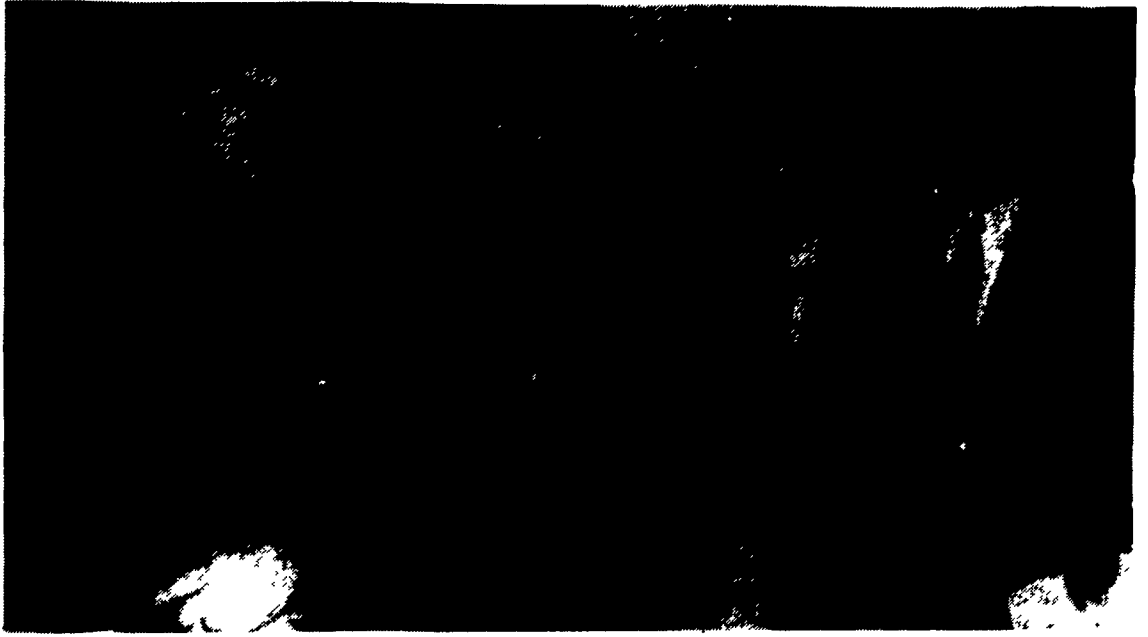
There are three designated values to sludge: first, Exceptional Quality Sludge, which is pasteurized, non-liquid, and is treated for disease vectors (it can be "bagged and sold in K-Mart," noted Stehouwer). Second is the Non-Exceptional Quality Sludge, which is sanitized, has reduced disease vector, and has low pathogen levels. The third type is May Not Be Land Applied Sludge, which must be landfilled or incinerated.

Sludge is carefully examined at treatment sites and records are kept regularly regarding the sludge's nutrient value. It is checked for 10 trace metal and materials: arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, molybdenum, nickel, selenium, zinc, and PCBs.

When using sludge for field applications, producers need to understand the phosphorous load in the soil, because sludge has a lot of it.

"Phosphorous will be a nutrient and environmental problem long before the trace metals will," said Stehouwer. However, it will take "400 years of annual applications at agronomic need rates to reach the cumulative loading limits," he said.

There are certain restrictions as to what kinds of crops can be grown and when after application. These were examined at the Crops Day.



Chester County Crops Day speakers, from left, Nathan Rettig, site manager of Cargill in Marietta; Greg Roth, Penn State corn specialist; John Yocum, manager of the Penn State Landisville research station; Rick Stehouwer, Penn State agronomist; and John Berry, extension agent, marketing.

## Corn Types, Technologies

Also at the Crops Day, Greg Roth, corn specialist from Penn State, spoke about emerging types of corn, including Bt corn, high oil corn, herbicide-resistant varieties, brown midrib corn, and leafy corn hybrids.

Roth also spoke about the use of precision yield monitoring equipment, narrow-row corn trials, and other types of corn.

Nathan Rettig, site manager at Cargill in Marietta, spoke about the need to increase the quality of corn and keeping field matter out of the corn supplied to the elevator.

He said the wave of the future is specialty grains and the grower should consider strategies necessary to grow them.

Lou Middleton, horticulture agent, spoke about field rinsing

insecticide sprayers and also provided an update on the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture survey at the Chester County Crops Day.

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