



# CORN TALK

**PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOC., INC.**

*Corn Talk, Lancaster Farming, Saturday, March 7, 1998*

## Soil Organic Contents High — So Are Yields On Chester County Corn Grower's Farm

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**REINHOLDS** (Lancaster Co.) — Crop specialists have known for years that impressive corn yields are possible by rotating to corn from a sod or legume.

But one master corn grower looks deeper, and possibly struck gold — in a way — by paying attention to improving soil organic content.

When other fields endured yet another droughty season in 1997, Reinholds-area corn grower Jeff Mitchell took a

look at one plot — plot number 2, in his records — on previous soybean ground in West White-land Township in Chester County which he manages. The plot's soil is Hagerstown loam with a pH of 6.6.

That's not so impressive. But what does stand out is the soil format according to tests conducted recently by a private company.

That plot's soil tested high for organic matter (4.7 percent) with an 11.8 CEC (or "cation exchange capacity," the ability of the soil to hold nutrients for

the plant's use). The plot was located near a PennDOT wetlands restoration project. Having an estimated nitrogen release (ENR) of 127 pounds per acre also helps. (ENR refers to the amount of nitrogen expected to be released from the available organic matter in the soil.)

The soil test showed high to very high levels of phosphorous and potassium with a medium-level amount of calcium and other nutrients. Mitchell conducts no nitrogen

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Jeff Mitchell was recently honored as a first-place champion in the Five-Acre Corn Club Contest at the Pennsylvania Corn and Soybean Conference. Jeff farms in Reinholds with his wife Susie and son Matt, 3.

## PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

### President's Message

**Chris Krimmel**  
President, PMCGA



**ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT**  
Who says there are no growth areas for customer service programs?

According to statistics from the Chicago-based International Customer Service Association, here are 10 industries or organizations that could take a closer look at customer service techniques:

- 5,517,200 cases of soft drinks produced in the next 12 months will be flat.
- 2,488,200 books will be shipped with the wrong cover in the next 12 months.
- 2,000,000 documents will be lost by the IRS this year.
- 268,500 defective tires will be shipped this year.
- 114,500 mismatched pairs of shoes will be shipped this

- year.
  - 22,000 checks will be deducted from the wrong bank accounts in the next 60 minutes.
  - 3,506 copies of tomorrow's Wall Street Journal will be missing one of its three sections.
  - 1,314 phone calls are misplaced by telecommunications
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## Maximum Yield Goals Require Vigilance

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**GRANTVILLE** (Dauphin Co.) — Think of this: 328 bushels per acre of corn.

To some growers, this could be simply an after-supper dream as they gaze upon the entry form for the multi-acre corn club contest.

But at Rutgers University, this dream already came true — years ago.

In 1991, using what can only be described as "vigilance" and by blending various hybrids, Dr. Joseph Heckman, Rutgers University extension specialist, achieved just that as part of an ongoing "maximum yield research" program at the university.

The goals of the project: identify yield factors and use methodologies to overcome limitations of the soil, the seed, and the crops themselves.

Heckman spoke to about 200 producers and agri-industry representatives recently at the Pennsylvania Corn and Soy-

bean conference at the Holiday Inn in Grantville.

Of course, the project didn't concern itself with the "economic or practical aspects" of growing a top crop, Heckman noted. The project simply looked for ways to increase yield.

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## CORN TALK Farm Calendar

- Tuesday, March 10**  
Jefferson County Crops Day, Brady Township Community Center, Luthersburg, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 11**  
Crops Clinic, Student Community Activity Center, Penn State Schuylkill Campus, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Thursday, March 12**  
Fulton County Crops Day, McConnellsburg American Legion.

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First-place winners in the 5-Acre Corn Club contest are, from left, Jeff Mitchell, Richard Crone, and David Schantz. Read more about them on page 10.