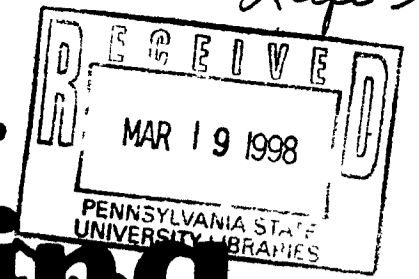


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Nutrient Management Proposals Challenge Future Of Farming

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The future of farming in the United States, especially in the Mid-Atlantic states, is being increasingly challenged, but perhaps never so much as it is about to be, according to some public officials, and agronomic and farming experts.

Not only are farmers and agribusiness being challenged to transition to compete toe-to-toe with global competitors, under different standards for production, but now the environmental production standards for United States farmers are to be increased.

According to reports presented Tuesday to the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission Nutri-

ent Management Advisory Board, it seems that national mandatory nutrient management planning through the oversight of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is inevitable, and that the planning will be based on fertilizer applications meeting crop needs with emphasis on not exceeding phosphorus levels.

In other words, it appears that American agriculture is going to be severely restricted, in many cases, from putting animal manure on soils; especially manures high in phosphorus, and especially on land high in phosphorus.

For Lancaster County, that is more than 80 percent of the land, according to older data used to illustrate the potential impact.

The bottom line is that, if federal

regulatory goals and recent soil science findings are upheld, it may be difficult for livestock farmers to find a use for animal manure.

And, if other states adopt what is predicted to be Maryland's probable regulatory restrictions on nutrient applications, then applying animal manure on land may

become the job of only the government certified.

The reason for the dour outlook for domestic farming is all tied to the nutrient phosphorus.

And politics.

In Pennsylvania, one of the first states to adopt mandatory nutrient management planning for high

density livestock operations, research-based information was used to make nitrogen the nutrient of most concern, because nitrogen is known to be water soluble, fairly easily converted into gaseous form, and high levels in ground water have been linked to health

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Maryland Ayrshire Breeders Meet

KAREN BUTLER

Maryland Correspondent
MT. AIRY, Md. — Maryland Ayrshire enthusiasts honored some of their own here recently at their annual business meeting. With a turnout of approximately 75, the Maryland Ayrshire Association banquet, held at the Four

Seasons restaurant, provided the breeders an opportunity to publicly recognize some of the behind-the-scenes dedication shown by association members.

New officers were elected and directors appointed during the business meeting. Officers of the

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From a small orchard and a roadside stand, Brown's Orchard Retail Market has expanded to include 173 acres and a wildly successful retail center with bakery, fresh produce, and country gifts. Nona Brown shows off top quality fruit that is at the heart of the family's 50 years in business. Turn to page B4 to read how the Brown family works together in orchard care and marketing. Also the fruit story below that tells of the damage to the trees from the recent cold weather.

Cold Weather Damages Fruit, Flower Production Across Region

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
FAIRFIELD (Adams Co.) — "On Monday morning, a lot of people are going to spend time riding around on the farms and looking at buds."

Those were the words of orchard manager Dave Benner on Thursday morning last week as growers began the task of assessing the extent of the brutally cold late-season weather mid-week throughout the region.

Benner, of El Vista Orchards in Fairfield, maintains 100 acres of peaches and about 400 acres of apples.

Trouble is, according to many growers and fruit education specialists, it will take some time — even up to a month or so — before the full extent of the damage is known.

A bright side is that growers are aware of the dangers of the cold and have taken steps with the location of their orchards. Other than

that, when there is a region-wide freeze such as this, "there's nothing you can do," said Benner.

Bill Kleiner, Penn State regional fruit specialist, noted that this year is similar to 1990, when growers experienced a cold December but in January, "it really warmed up," he said. The significant warmup was enough "to pull trees out of dormancy." Then a cold snap broke, and March warmed up again.

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Heather Long, left, and Amanda Valentine, Maryland Ayrshire princess, on the right, present Mary Creek with a basket of variegated ivy in recognition of her years of dedication and service to the Maryland Junior Ayrshire Association.

National Letter Writing Campaign Launched To Save Valuable Pesticides

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The American Farm Bureau Federation has joined with the American Crop Protection Association (ACPA) to alert farmers and growers that critical pest control options on most U.S. crops will be lost if the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency continues its rush to judgment in implementing the new Food Quality Protection Act.

The Farm Bureau and ACPA are urging farmers and industry members to go direct to congressional representatives, to the Environmental Protection Association and to the White House about the growing concern. RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), the association for the specialty, non-farm pesticide industry, also is urging its mem-

bers to become involved. Many of the same products for crop pest control are essential to control disease-carrying vermin for consumer health and safety.

Jay J. Vroom, ACPA president, says that EPA's strict adherence to tight time frames for pesticide tolerance reviews is pushing aside fairness and accuracy in favor of expediency and political agendas.

If this continues, he says farmers will lose valuable protection from pests on a large number of crops from apples to apricots, cotton to cauliflower, watermelons to zucchini. "Three dependable, economical cotton insecticide uses already have been denied by EPA," he noted.

Leonard Gianessi, consultant to EPA at the National Center for

Food and Agriculture Policy, emphasizes the unrealistic FQPA deadlines. "EPA must reassess all U.S. pesticide tolerances — more than 9,000 — in 10 years, but some 3,000 must be done by August of 1999. That's less than 18 months from now — a virtual impossibility," Gianessi says. The methods which EPA uses in the

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