

## Nutrient Management Planning Costs

Leon Ressler  
Extension Agent

### Agriculture/Environment

The Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Law created a program to certify commercial nutrient management planners. Approximately two hundred people have been provisionally certified to write plans in Pennsylvania. The provisional tag will be removed from the certification status after three plans have been written and approved. Concentrated animal operations (those with two animal units per acre) which were in existence when the law became effective (October 1, 1997) have until September 30, 1998 to submit a nutrient management plan for their operations.

The cost for most nutrient management plans will fall in the \$300-\$800 range. What factors will effect the cost of a commercially written plan? Simply put, the cost of the plan is really influenced by the amount of time the planner has invested. So the more information you can provide the planner the less the plan will cost you. For example if you can provide a good map from an aerial photograph, up to date soil tests and manure tests this will help

keep the cost down. However if you provide your own soil and manure tests the testing costs will not be eligible for cost share. Other factors which will impact the cost include the number of acres in the plan, the number of individual fields, the number of different crops and the number of manure types on the operation. The more complex the operation the more the plan will cost. Exporting of manure is fairly simple from a planning standpoint so if a large portion of manure is exported this will tend to reduce the cost of the plan.

Some planners price the project on an acre basis and most plans will fall into the \$3-\$6 per acre range. Usually this price includes soil tests as well as taking the samples (one test for each 10-20 acres). Generally one manure test is included in this price. If the commercial planner includes these testing expenses in the plan cost, these costs will be eligible for cost share. Some planners will quote a price based on information about your operation learned during a short phone conversation. Some planners will bill on an hourly rate basis.

Cost sharing is available for

nutrient management planning. Cost share must be approved prior to the beginning of the planning process so if you are interested in cost share funds contact your local conservation district to obtain approval.

For commercially developed plans cost share for a farm of 0-50 acres is 75% of actual costs not to exceed \$250. For 50 or more acres the cost share is 75% of costs not to exceed \$4 per acre or \$800 per operation. Cost share funds are available for farmer developed plans as well. For a plan developed by an individual for his own operation the cost share is \$200 for an operation of up to 50 acres. For an operation over 50 acres the cost share is \$3 per acre not to exceed \$800 per operation. Only concentrated animal operations will be eligible for cost share funds in the first year of the program. After October 1, 1998 voluntary nutrient management plans will be able to receive cost share funds as well.

If you decide you would like to become certified to write your own plan there is still opportunity to attend some training sessions and take the exam by mid summer. This will still allow you to have your plan completed by the September 30 deadline for submitting plans for concentrated animal operations. An optional training session on soil fertility and manure management will be held in Lancaster on June 23. The required recertification training will be held in Lancaster on June 30. The certification exam will be offered in Lancaster on July 8th. All three of these events will be held at The Farm and Home Center located at 1383 Arcadia Road Lancaster. To register please contact Leon Ressler at (717)-394-6851.

## Hosts Open House

LOWELLVILLE (Lawrence Co.) - Yeo Farms hosted its 12<sup>th</sup> annual open house for young people at the farm on Saturday, April 18.

Twenty-nine youth from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland participated in the livestock judging contest that morning. Twenty-eight lambs were then sold in the Yeo Farms Club Lamb Sale that afternoon.

The number of head sold at Yeo Farms Club Lamb was up this year, and top prices were high this year than last. Four ewe lambs sold with prices up to \$130 and 24 wether lambs sold with prices up to \$275.

Susan Cunningham, of Hanoverton, Ohio, was the buyer for the two highest priced lambs. Other top-price lambs went to Bryan North of Waterford and John Kennedy of Mayport.

The sale featured lambs out of Yeo Farms' Cardinal Creek ram, as well as a ram bred by Yeo Farms that had been a part of Yeo Farms successful show flock two years ago.

Winning first place in the individual judging competition in the junior division was Kevin Farrell, of Charlotte Hall, Md., and in the senior division Melissa Ferguson, of Geneva, Ohio. Out of a perfect score of 400, Farrell scored 365 and Ferguson scored 370.

In the team competition, the blue ribbon of the junior division was captured by a team consisting of Sara Braun of Mechanicsville, Md., Kevin

Farrell, and Becky Rice-Overstreet of Charlotte Hall, Md. The second-place team consisted of Michael Farrell, also of Charlotte Hall, Md., Josh and Katie Mast of Mechanicsville, Md., and Katie Roberts of Bryantown, Md.

In the senior division first place was won by a team consisting of Christy Cunningham of Hanoverton, Ohio, Melissa Ferguson, Bryan Hirschlach of Jewett, Ohio, and Jessica Leben of Geneva, Ohio. In second place was the team made up of Jocelyn and Philip DeSenze and Chary Greier - all from Salem, Ohio.

In all, there were three junior teams made up of young people between the ages of 8 and 12, together with five senior teams for contestants between the ages of 13 and 18.

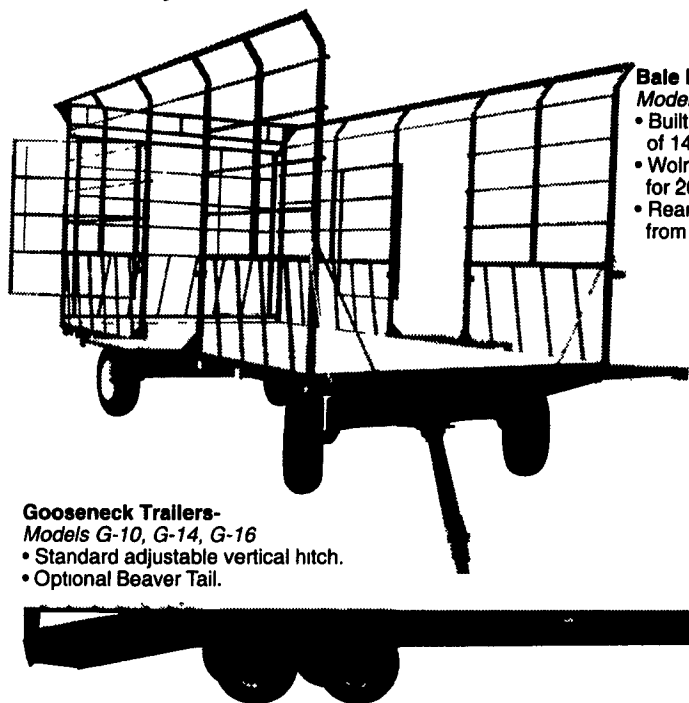
Each participant was asked to evaluate eight classes of livestock containing four animals each. There were four classes of beef cattle and four of Suffolk sheep.

The classes were prejudged by John Allen III. This was the second year that Allen of Armstrong Farms in Saxonsburg was the guest judge. He has shown cattle all over the country, was a star member of the Penn State Judging Team while in college, and is a past president of the American Junior Shorthorn Association.

The "Wild and Woolly" 4-H Club of Ashtabula County, Ohio provided the snack bar for the event.

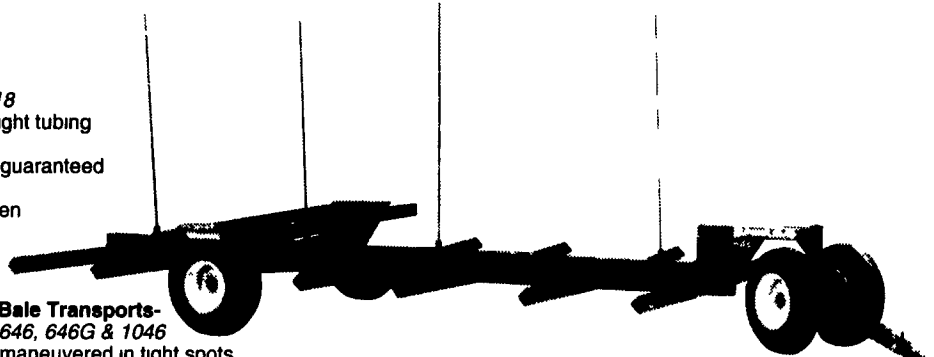
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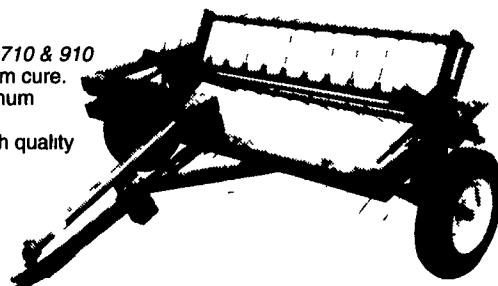
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