

# LANCASTER FARMING

## SPECIAL SECTIONS

## CORN TALK

**SATURDAY, OCT. 10**  
**ADVERTISING DEADLINE**  
**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2**

**PENNSYLVANIA FORAGE AND GRASSLAND COUNCIL**

# FORAGING AROUND

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# 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 form 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 wet lands 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 phosphorus and potassium with a medium level amount of calcium and other nutrients. Mitchell conducts no nitrogen



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 Kimmel**  
 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

To some growers this could simply be an after supper 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 and the crops themselves.

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

## Maximum Yield Goals Require Vigilance

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

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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.

**CORN TALK**  
 Farm Calendar

**Friday, 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

(Turn to Page 2)



## FORAGING AROUND

Industry, Farmer, Scientist — Working Together Toward A Sounder Grassland Program



In mid April this year Doug Martin, left, helped conduct a pasture walk for the county graziers at the Chambersburg farm. At right, partner Paul Holderman manages the fieldwork on the farm. Altogether the Martins care for about 800 acres, including rented ground. Photo by Andy Andrews

### Dairyman, Conservationist Receives Highest PFGC Award

**GAIL STROCK**  
 Mifflin Co. Correspondent

**LEWISTOWN** — Mifflin County farmer Doug Martin has been named the 1998 Conservationist Dairyman award winner for his dedication to producing good quality milk.

Feeding quality forage usually translates into better milk production and better feed costs both with a healthy dose of soil conservation thrown in. His collection of awards prove his dedication in all of these areas.

(Turn to Page 9)



Jim Hostetter of Lewistown Mifflin County received this desk plaque for his dedicated service to the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council

### Franklin County Dairymen Understand Needs Of Grazing Cows

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
 Lancaster Farming Staff  
**CHAMBERSBURG** (Franklin Co.) — Franklin County grazer Doug Martin understands cows.

He knows they enjoy open air housing. They like fresh small paddocks. Cows enjoy a "salad bar" mix of grasses including orchardgrass, rye grass, matua grass and clovers.

Cows like smooth even lanes to walk to pasture. They like to have plenty of water to dip their tongues into on a hot summer day.

Cows enjoy keeping cool too. In fact, producers see the effects of any kind of heat stress in the milk check.

Martin has taken the wishes of his 300-head Jersey milking herd on his Chambersburg farm to heart.

He has to, because there is literally not enough room for the all registered herd in a sense.

The freestall housing at Pleasant Valley Jerseys amounts to enough for about 200 cows. Martin has 300 cows to care for — so not all of them can be in the barn at the same time.

This member of the Franklin County Graziers believes that open air housing provides enough room to ensure the cows get enough to eat, are comfortable and can be readily milked and

(Turn to Page 2)



Robert Bieber, who has been growing hay for years at his Northampton County farm, reveals the "secrets" to growing high-quality hay — hay that can net a premium price at any auction. Photo by Andy Andrews

### Nazareth Farmer Learns That Drying Can Lead To Great Bales

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
 Lancaster Farming Staff  
**NAZARETH** (Northampton Co.) — As Robert Bieber slowly removes fresh alfalfa hay he separates a few slices. Out fall some of the leaves. Look at that hay he says. No mold or wet spots. Perfect all the way through.

Bieber points to a pallet ready to ship to one of the horse farms that regularly buy his hay.

This hay they can feed immediately, he says.

Bieber who has been growing hay for years at his Northampton County

(Turn to Page 4)