



# FORAGING AROUND

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



## Striving For Quality? Take It Easy On The Hay, According To Halifax Producer

**ANDY ANDREWS**

Lancaster Farming Staff

HALIFAX (Dauphin Co.) — Don't over-rake it. Don't beat it. Get it baled dry enough and as soon as possible.

Above all, to get good hay, you have to feed it.

"Fertilizer pays. It doesn't cost you," said Joel Steigman, who farms 250 acres at two separate sites below Broad Mountain near Halifax.

Steigman took home champion honors in Class 4, alfalfa grass mixed, later cutting, field dried, at the 1998 Hay Show during this year's Ag Progress Days.

All the alfalfa hay on the farm was topdressed with 0-15-30, in addition to soil testing recommendations where needed, according to Steigman. An important ingredient for champion hay, besides good soil tilth and pH, is the use of manure.

Steigman applies layer manure to the fields as needed. "I soil test all the time," he said.

He applies manure from 40-some head of feeder cattle, in addition to chicken manure, which is worked into the soil on a rotation. He maintains some cows and calves and buys feeders.

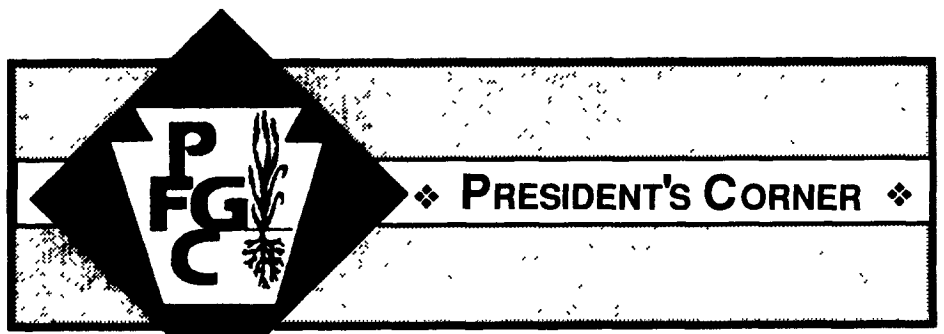
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Joel Steigman took home champion honors in Class 4, alfalfa grass mixed, later cutting, field dried, at the 1998 Hay Show during this year's Ag Progress Days. He also maintains test plots of new alfalfa varieties on his farm. About seven acres with six different varieties are kept at the farm. The test plots are looking at the correct seeding rates for the hay. Photo by Andy Andrews



Dave Hartman, Penn State forage specialist, right, shows the long root structure of a new type of hybrid grass while Bucky Ziegler, Milton, looks on. Find out more about the hybrid grass on page 16.



**PAUL H. CRAIG**

Pennsylvania Dept. of Ag  
Nutrient Management

Did you know that Pennsylvania is the 10th largest producer of hay in the United States? I didn't!

Based on results from the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Department on an annual basis, Pennsylvania produces 4.7 million tons of hay on nearly 2.1 million acres.

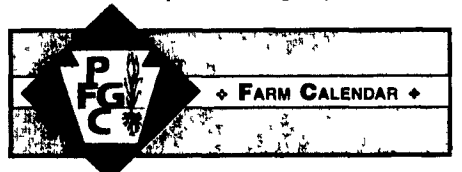
Alfalfa is the state's largest single forage crop, making up slightly more than 800,000 acres and more than one-half the total hay production. In addition to hay production, there are more than 2.3 million acres of pasture in Pennsylvania.

The forage industry is a major agricultural enterprise in Pennsylvania and the northeastern United States. About 60 percent (\$1.9 billion) of the total cash receipts from the sale of agricultural products in Pennsylvania are derived from meat and milk sales. In Pennsylvania there are approximately

720,000 milk cows, 216,000 beef cows, and 134,000 sheep. Forage crops constitute the major feed component in the diet of these animals, making forages the backbone of Pennsylvania's agriculture and rural economy.

In addition, forages are environ-

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**Tuesday, November 17**

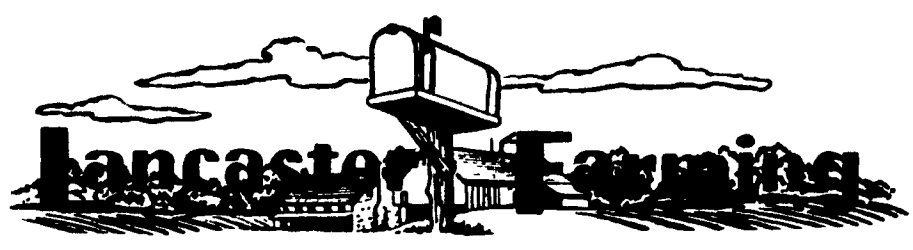
Quality Forage Conference, Holiday Inn and TGIF, Williamsport.

**Tuesday, December 8**

Mid-Atlantic Crop Management School, Princess Royale Oceanfront Hotel and Conference Center, Ocean City, Md., thru Dec. 10.

Dairy Feeding Systems Conference, Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and

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Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland Council

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