



ARE YOU READY FOR Y2K?

**Leon Ressler
Lancaster County
Extension Agent**

Agriculture/Environment

Much has been in the news lately about the millennium computer or Year 2000 (Y2K), bug.

Many computer programs still in use today were developed years ago when computer memory was much more limited than it is today. Because of that, many programmers used only two digits for the year in dates used by the programs. So the year 1998 is recorded as simply 98.

Problems could occur after December 31, 1999, when the 99 date turns over to 00. The computer may confuse the year 2000 for the year 1900. This could cause some computers to fail.

Experts differ in their assess-

ment of how serious the problems will be. Some feel we will have inconveniences similar to a major winter storm while others project serious failures in infrastructure. Worst case scenarios include loss of electric power, loss of public water and sewer, and a major economic downturn because of computer failures in manufacturing and distribution industries.

So what should a poultry producer do to be prepared?

First, evaluate what equipment and processes are using computer programs in your operations. Does your climate control system have computerized control of the ventilation fans? Although any problems that may occur will happen in January when ventilation is needed less than during the warm months, failure of the ventilation system could still have very serious consequences.

Contact your equipment supplier to see if your products are Y2K-ready. If they are not, discuss with the supplier what can be done to get your equipment ready in time.

Start with the most critical systems such as ventilation and water supply first. Do not test the system simply by advancing the clock. This could trigger major failure which could be very difficult and time-consuming to repair. Consult your equipment supplier for professional help to test your systems.

It is important to understand that many pieces of equipment today have imbedded computer chips which may not be obvious. These chips may contain date-sensitive programming which could fail when the date turns to 00. Check with your supplier to determine which items have imbedded chips and then seek help from them to test the equipment.

Prepare an emergency back-up plan to be used in case major disruptions in supplies and services do occur. This plan should cover your household needs as well as your business enterprise. How long will your fuel supply for your emergency electrical

generator last? If an interruption in the power supply lasts for more than a day or two, would you be prepared to deal with it? How about an interruption in your feed delivery? Again, consult with your input suppliers to see what steps they have taken to be Y2K compliant.

While the year 2000 may seem far away, it is imperative that you do not wait to begin your evaluation. It could take a substantial amount of time to repair any problems you are able to identify.

While no one knows for sure how much disruption will occur at the turn of the century, it is wise to make sure your systems are Y2K compliant and prepare a contingency plan in case dis-

ruptions do occur.

A number of internet sites contain information related to the Y2K issue. These include the USDA Year 2000 Program Office, USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer site at <http://www.ocio.USDA.gov/y2k/index.htm> and the President's Council on Year 2000 Food Supply Working Group site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/y2k>. Other sites dealing with the issue are the USDA National Information Technology Center site at <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/nite/y2kindex.html> and the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service site at <http://www.reeusda.gov/y2k>.

Landowners Conference Jan. 30

ERIE (Erie Co.) — The Third Annual Forest Landowners Conference is scheduled Saturday, Jan. 30, here at the Penn State Behrend College. Cost for the program, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. is \$13 and pre-registration is required by Jan. 20.

The conference is targeted toward private forest landowners interested in taking care of their woodland. Cooperatively sponsored by Penn State

Cooperative Extension, the Bureau of Forestry, and the Behrend College, the day is open to anyone with an interest in natural resources and their stewardship.

Contact Warren County Cooperative Extension, 1609 Rouse Ave., Suite 200, Youngsville, PA 16371, (814) 563-9388, warrenext@psu.edu, for a program brochure and registration form.

Paul B. Zimmerman, Inc.

Heavy Duty Bale Movers

Finished with Baked on TGIC Polyester Powder Coating
With Kverneland Forged Steel Spears • Electrically Heat Treated
These spears are stronger & allow easier bale penetration

COM 2502

- Fits any 3 pt hitch or loader boom with 1 or 2 cylinders
- Easy to change from 1 to 2 spears
- 2500 lb. capacity

3 PT 2502

- For 3 point hitch
- Easy to change from 1 spear to 2
- 1500 lb. capacity

2 PT 1000

- Attaches to lower 3 pt. arms only
- Safety chains prevent flip around
- 1000 lb capacity

3 PT 1252

- Easy to change from 1 spear to 2
- 1250 lb. capacity
- 1 7/8" CRS-C1144 steel spear

Feed Big Round & Regular Bales or Stacks

Hay Bale Feeders
with 4', 5', 6', 8' & 10' panels

SSL 2500

- Great for front loaders
- Mounts in minutes
- 1500 lb capacity

PFL 4000

- Front end loader fork
- Includes chain & binders
- 1500 lb capacity

Two Coat Process! **Added Value With Our 2 Coat Process!**

1. Five step metal preparation, including iron phosphate conversion coating, to enhance adhesion & prevent undercoat corrosion.
2. Zinc rich epoxy powder undercoat.
3. TGIC polyester powder top coat, baked at 400° to fuse coats, forming a cross link molecular bond.

Paul B. Zimmerman, Inc.

295 Woodcorner Rd. • Lititz, PA 17543

717/738-7365

1 mile West of Ephrata

Hours: Mon. thru Fri.: 7-5 Sat. 7-11

Call or write for additional information & the name of your nearest dealer

GENERATORS

MARTIN ELECTRIC PLANTS • Manufacturer of:
DIESEL, LP GAS, NATURAL GAS, PTO
Automatic & Manual Start Systems
USED UNITS ALSO AVAILABLE

Call Us For All Your Generator Needs!

MARTIN ELECTRIC PLANTS

280 Pleasant Valley Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522-8620
800-713-7968
Tel: 717-733-7968 Fax: 717-733-1981

DON'T LOOK ANY FURTHER!

YOU'LL FIND IT IN LANCASTER FARMING'S CLASSIFIEDS

36 REAL ESTATE

SALE

Grain, Vegetable & Hunting Farm One of the largest single contiguous property on Maryland's Eastern Shore 800+/- acres with 500+/- acres tillable mostly irrigated, irrigation equipment included \$1,875,000.00 "Can be subdivided" Shown by appointment only NO LOOKERS All Buyers must be qualified by broker 2% to Buyers Broker Contact: Judy Hopkins at 302-653-4538 Chabbott Petrosky Commercial Realtors 2 North State Street Dover, Delaware 19901 Phone #302-678-3276 Or 800-678-7105