

Student Ag Day At Maryland Ready For 74th Annual Run

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Every year, on the fourth Saturday in April, students in the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources alert the academic community and Washington, D.C., area commuters to the fact that farm animals still are part of the scene on this urban-oriented campus.

As it has for nearly three-fourth of a century, Maryland's 74th annual Student Ag Day on April 24 will attempt to convey the atmosphere and traditions of a small-scale country fair in an urban setting. This year's theme is "Agriculture — More Than Cows and Flows."

In 1971, Ag Day was the only fourth-Saturday-in-April event not

shut down by the National Guard, which was occupying the campus to control anti-Vietnam War protest activities. This year, Ag Day is but one example of "Explore Our World" open houses being held across the campus following the inauguration of a new University of Maryland president on Friday (April 23).

Most Ag Day festivities will center on the livestock barns area, behind the Institute for Physical Science and Technology, at the intersection of Regents Drive and Farm Drive. The event will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is no admission charge.

Typical of country fairs, Ag Day will feature student competition in fitting and showing farm

animals — dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine and sheep. Meanwhile, student riders from the University of Maryland equestrian team will perform at 1 p.m.

A swine fitting and showing contest for faculty members with little or no previous experience will get under way at 2:30 p.m. And Dan Mote, the newly inaugurated University of Maryland president, will be on hand at 3 p.m. to award championship ribbons to top student contestants in farm animal fitting and showing.

Five faculty members from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources will star in a new "Kiss the Pig" contest; and there will be a faculty dunking booth, with a disk jockey furnishing

background country and bluegrass music.

Hamburgers and hot dogs will be on sale throughout the day by members of Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity. Bedding plants and vegetable transplants will be sold by the University of Maryland student chapter of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers.

There will be a farm animal petting zoo for children and a dog-and-pony animal circus, along with a demonstration by "Fidos for Freedom" dogs for handicapped persons.

New features this year will include "Cow Chip Bingo" and a display of modern and antique farm machinery.

James R. Adkins of Parsonsbury (Wicomico County), a senior in Biological Resources Engineering, is this year's Ag Day coordinator. Adkins is second vice president of Ag Student Council,

which sponsors the annual event with assistance from other student organizations in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Richard A Ahrens of Berwyn Heights (Prince George's County) is in his third year as faculty adviser to the Ag Student Council. Dr. Ahrens is a professor of nutrition and food science. He is scheduled to retire later this year; so the 1999 official Ag Day program book is dedicated to him.

Judges for the livestock fitting and showing competition will be as follows:

Dairy cattle — Jeffery W. Semler of Clear Spring (Washington County). Semler is a Maryland Cooperative Extension 4-H youth and agriculture/natural resources educator in his county. He has been an assistant coach for both the Maryland 4-H and collegiate dairy cattle judging teams.

Swine — G. Barry Roach of Piney Point (St. Mary's County). Roach is involved with the Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship, operating the school's government-owned farm, where he raises cattle, hogs and crops. He is a 1975 University of Maryland alumnus in Government and Politics.

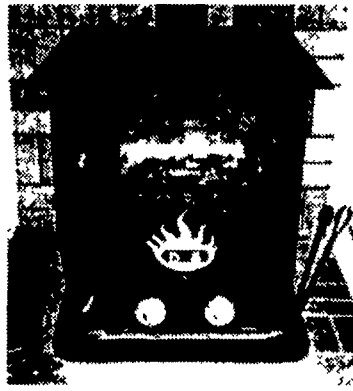
Beef cattle — R. Graddon Ripley of Davidsonville (Anne Arundel) County. Ripley grew up on a livestock farm and serves as a coach for the Howard County 4-H livestock judging team. He is a noted beef cattle judge.

Sheep — Jennifer Woodward-Greene of Woodbine (Howard County). Ms. Greene was graduated cum laude from the University of Maryland in 1994 with a B.S. degree from the animal and avian sciences department, where she currently is a graduate student. She grew up on a sheep farm and is a former Maryland Lamb and Wool Queen.

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