

Let Master Gardeners Help You Prepare For Spring

WEST CHESTER (Chester Co.)—Now's the time to take advantage of the expert help being offered by Penn State Master

Gardeners at their spring seminar, Saturday, Feb. 26, from 9 a.m. to noon in the hall of the Central Presbyterian Church in

Downingtown.

Pruning, repairing your lawn, propagating plants, and beginning a vegetable garden are the

topics which will be covered. Each of these session will be open to home gardeners' questions, with Penn State Master

Gardeners from Chester County supplying the answers.

Refreshments are provided, parking is free, and admission is only \$5 when received by Feb. 21, or \$7 at the door. This is a great way to meet your local Penn State Extension folks. The official mission of the Master Gardeners is to help homeowners deal with those pesky gardening problems.

The timing is perfect to find out how to prune your shrubs and trees to manage any winter damage, as well as to help steer your plants toward vigorous growth this spring. Just a few snips here and there can make all the difference. Master Gardeners will tell you how.

And who doesn't have some bald spot in their lawn after this past summer's drought? You can hear how to revive your lawn—reseeding and fertilizing will be covered in depth. There will also be a presentation on possible alternatives to maintaining that lawn, for those who want to reduce their mowing.

How to propagate shrubs and geraniums will be discussed, too. You can save money by multiplying what plant material you already have. It's easier than you think.

Easy-to-grow vegetables will also be explored. Experienced vegetable gardeners will share their growing tips and help you get started with a vegetable garden of your own. You can learn from their mistakes, and benefit from their experience.

What better thing to do while still in winter's cold? Start thinking about spring, and meet your Chester County Master Gardeners. They can show you what kind of help you are entitled to get from them through your local extension office.

Master Gardeners are community volunteers trained by Penn State extension agents. Once they complete their training, Master Gardeners begin volunteer service. They cooperate with service agencies and community groups on a wide range of gardening projects. This popular seminar series is just one of those projects.

As part of the service they provide, Master Gardeners help educate individuals and groups in plant selection; weed, insect, and disease identification; composting; landscape design; pest control; park improvement; community gardening; and many more areas. If you have a particular need or question, just call the Extension Office at (610) 696-3500.

To register for the spring seminar, call that same number, (610) 696-3500. They will also give you directions to the Central Presbyterian Church in Downingtown.

Dairy Of Distinction Seeks Nice Looking Farms

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — Do you take pride in maintaining your dairy farm? Does your farm project an attractive, wholesome image to consumers? If so, the Dairy of Distinction Program of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Vermont is looking for you.

The Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program that oversees the Distinction program was first started in 1983 in Pennsylvania. The Dairy of Distinction recognize the hard work and dedication of the farmers who maintain attractive farms.

The purpose of the program is to instill a greater sense of confidence in the wholesomeness of dairy products, thus increasing sales.

Farms that apply are judged on the roadside appearance of building, grounds, and surroundings, since this is what our dairy product consumers observe as they drive by the farm.

The cleanliness of the barnyard, feed areas, and manure management are all areas taken into consideration when a team of judges takes a look at your farm from the road. Your milk cooperative or handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality.

Judging is conducted during the month of May. Award winners are announced during local June Dairy Month activities.



Del-Jame Farm near Hamburg in Berks County is a 1999 Dairy of Distinction winner. Since the program began in 1987 in Pennsylvania, more than 700 farms have been given this farm beautification award. Entries are now being received for the year 2000 program. Take time to enter your farm now.

ties. To qualify for consideration, you must be actively dairy farming and shipping milk.

Applications are available for Pennsylvania dairy farms from Michael O'Conner, 324 Henning Building, Dept. of Dairy and Animal Science, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802. Phone: (814) 863-3913.

New York State applications are available from Carol Keene-Ainsille, 3993 Jordonville Road,

Jordonville, NY 13361. Phone: (315) 858-2770.

For New Jersey applications, contact Joy Ricker, 91 Beemer Road, Sussex, NJ 07461. Phone: (973) 875-4803.

For Vermont applications, send to Elisa Clancy, Vermont Department of Agriculture, 16 State Street, Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901. Phone: (802) 828-3835.

All applications must be completed and returned to your re-

spective state secretary by April 15, 2000.

The Dairy of Distinction program is financed in Pennsylvania by dairy farmers through the American Dairy Association & Dairy Council Mid East and the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program in cooperation with many local agribusiness organizations. The program is conducted with advice and help from the Penn State Cooperative Extension.

Dairy of Distinction 2000 Pennsylvania Application

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

Attractive dairy farms give the consumer greater confidence in the wholesomeness of milk and stimulate milk sales which encourages public support for the dairy industry. The award gives recognition to the dairy farmer for maintaining a well-kept farmstead.

ELIGIBILITY

All Northeast dairy farms producing milk for sale are invited to submit an application for the award. Farms receiving the 10 highest scores in each of the 21 districts will receive an 18" x 24" Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed in front of their farm.

APPLICATION

Your Name _____ Farm Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number _____

Cooperative or Handler (where you ship your milk, be specific) _____

(Your Handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality)

Location (driving directions for judging team) _____

County (where your farm is located) _____

I hereby apply to the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee to have my dairy scored in accordance with the rules of the program for the purpose of obtaining a Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed on my premises. (No producer will be charged for scoring or sign expense.)

Signature Owner/Operator _____ Date _____

Return your application by April 15 to:

✓ PENNSYLVANIA — Michael O'Conner, 324 Henning Building, Dept. of Dairy and Animal Science, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802

✓ NEW YORK — Carol Keene-Ainsille, 3993 Jordonville Road, Jordonville, NY 13361

✓ NEW JERSEY — Joy Ricker, 91 Beemer Road, Sussex, NJ 07461

✓ VERMONT — Elisa Clancy, Vermont Department of Agriculture, 16 State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

Make Three Robert Truske END!

Ditrac

Tracking Powder*
Kills Rats & Mice
6 lb. Bucket
We Ship UPS \$49.95
+ \$6.00 Shipping

Rat & Mouse Bait Available

Blain Supply
Rt 1 Box 117H Blain PA 17006
717/536-3861

HOW IS YOUR FARM SCORED?

Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program Inc.

Awards will be based upon neatness, good maintenance, and other factors that can be controlled by the farmer. Attractive background scenery should not be weighted heavily in judging. All judging observations should be made from a vehicle at one or more points on an adjacent public highway. If the farm is off the road, the judging will take place from the nearest lane. Judging should give equal consideration to old wood construction and new construction of metal or concrete block.

The award program may be used for subsequent advertising or promotion activities for dairy products or dairy farming. Farmers who apply for the award agree that if selected they will cooperate with these promotion activities and make all reasonable efforts to maintain both the exterior and interior of their properties in an acceptable manner.

HOW THE APPLICATION WORKS

The owner or operator of the dairy farm should sign the application and send it to the Dairy of Distinction state secretary by April 15.

HOW THE JUDGING WORKS

Judging teams will visit farms during the month of May. Farms will be judged each year as the award is presented on an annual basis. Any dairy failing to maintain appearance standards will be asked to remove their signs. The Dairy of Distinction signs remain the property of the committee, not the property of the dairy farmer. All farms must achieve a compliance score of 90 percent on their Dairy of Distinction score card. Your cooperative or milk handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality.

RULES FOR THE DAIRY OF DISTINCTION AWARD

- 1) The Dairy of Distinction sign remains property of the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee.
- 2) The post and bracket shall be supplied by and maintained by the dairy farmer. It is suggested that a wood post 4' x 4' x 12' or iron pipe 2" x 12' can be used. Posts or pipe should be installed and maintained in true vertical position with 8" above ground. Top of the bracket should be lower than six inches from the top of the post.
- 3) Signs shall be displayed in front of the dairy at roadside. An attractive post or bracket, or other frame, shall be used to display the sign. No more than three signs should be displayed from the sign frame or post, and all shall be of a style, general size, and quality comparable to the Dairy of Distinction sign. Sign should be secured on all sides to avoid wind damages.
- 4) Signs shall not be moved to other premises. New owners of a Dairy of Distinction farm must apply to retain the sign.
- 5) Replacement of damaged signs is at the committee's discretion.
- 6) No producer shall be charged with scoring or sign expenses.
- 7) Judges' decisions will be final.
- 8) Judging will take place between May 1st and May 31st.
- 9) Farms awarded a Dairy of Distinction sign in previous years will be judged between April 1st and April 30th. If they do not qualify, they will be rejudged between May 1st and May 31st so they have the opportunity to keep the sign.
- 10) Farms that do not requalify will return the sign to their regional Dairy of Distinction committee.