Land Improvement, Composting Site Field Day June 16-17

WOOSTER, Ohio — The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center will host the Land Improvement and Composting Site Field Day beginning Friday, June 16, and ending in the early afternoon on Saturday, June 17.

The event is sponsored by the center's Ohio Composting and Manure Management (OCAMM) program and will address manure management and composting issues. The field day will provide opportunities to learn more about manure handling and composting fundamentals, including the benefits of composting and the importance of the new composting pad to OARDC scientists.

"We don't really have plans at this time of continuing the field day from year to year. When the Ohio Land Improvement Contractor's Association chose this site for their annual field day, we saw an opportunity to bring together OCAMM stakeholders to address manure management issues," said OCAMM Coordinator Mary Wicks.

The proposed composting site includes a 30,00-square-foot concrete composting pad with an adjacent 30,000-square-foot area for expansion and summer composting. The concrete pad has been designed with air ducts embedded in the pad to enhance drying and will provide the capability to produce commercial-grade composts as well as carry out high-quality research on smaller composting piles.

A treatment wetlands constructed adjacent to the composting pads will intercept and treat runoff from the composting area, minimizing the potential for nutrient contamination. The design calls for a series of three treatment cells for each pad located downhill from the composting area.

Composting addresses two major concerns that were expressed by an OARDC nutrient management team led by agricultural engineer Ted Short in 1998: (1) manure nutrients are produced in excess of crop needs at the Wooster Campus, and (2) the high volume of liquid manure from the OARDC dairy facilities presents the greatest challenge. The team concluded that composting provides the greatest potential for addressing these concerns and meeting nutrient balance objectives.

"We expect to have people with interests in livestock, manure management, and/or composting. In addition to educational seminars and tours, participants will have the opportunity to discuss issues with representatives from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and Ohio Department of Natural Resources," Wicks said.

The event kicks off on Friday morning at 9 a.m. with a seminar series that will last until noon. The topics will include manure handling alternatives and regulations, composting principles and systems, and compost siting and runoff treatment. Each session should last about 20 minutes. Friday's program is expected to be beneficial for personnel from regulatory agencies such as soil and water conservation districts.

Saturday's educational seminars will begin at 10 a.m. and end at 2 p.m. They will be geared more toward the general public. Topics will cover manure handling regulations, livestock industry and expansion in Ohio, and composting principles and utilization.

"Visitors can learn the principles of composting and the use of composting for manure management," Wicks said.

During the two-day event, there will be tours and demonstrations from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday and from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday. The tour topics will include composting site design and construction, drain tile installation, the OARDC Composting Research Center, windrow composting, vermicomposting, dead animal composting, and nutrient management planning.

For more information, call Mary Wicks at (330) 202-3533.

Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Receives Grant

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Pennsylvania's dairy promotion checkoff programs are on a quest to ensure cold milk is served in public schools. Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program, American Dairy Association & Dairy Council Mid East, American Dairy Association/Dairy Council Middle Atlantic and the American Dairy Association, Inc. were collectively awarded a $92,500 matching grant for the year 2000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to apply to this goal.

"The school lunch program is a win-win situation for our farmers and our students," said Debra Summerall, PDPP spokesperson. "Milk on the school meal line provides students an excellent source of calcium, needed for building strong bones during adolescence, and farmers a demand for their product. However, if not served under 40 degrees, students will bypass the calcium and eight other nutrients essential for good health that are found in milk for a less nutritional beverage."

In an effort to increase milk consumption in school, organizations have continued to work closely with school food service in Pennsylvania through "The Dairy Difference: Meeting the Needs of Pennsylvania School Children," an active plan that includes four important areas — "Operation Cold Milk," Chocolate Milk Marketing Promotion, Food Safety and Quality and School Food Service Advisory Council.

"Operation Cold Milk" is proactive approach to solving the warm milk problem in schools. Pennsylvania's dairy farmer-funded programs will use the grant to provide one of the following, depending on the respective territory in which the school is located: a serving line milk cooler, a Curton milk cooler curtain, an ice barrel for milk, cooler wraps or funds toward the purchase of a new full-size milk cooler.

"Milk on the serving line will only be purchased and consumed if it is cold," explained Joyce Abercrombie, ADADC Mid East director of school programs. "Our studies show that 60 percent of children who don't currently drink milk at school would drink milk if it were colder. The cold bags and other non-electric coolers offer an ideal alternate serving solution."

Placement of the coolers and ice barrels will also offer the opportunity for students to purchase milk at multiple sites in the school setting. The net effect is that children will receive the calcium they need to increase bone development, while increasing the sales of milk at school — a win-win situation for students and farmers.

Complementing "Operation Cold Milk," a chocolate milk marketing promotion will be instituted this spring with a portion of the PDA grant. "The marketing project will serve as a catalyst to change behavior and entice children to purchase chocolate milk," Abercrombie explained. "This will positively impact school sales."

Staff from all regions will reinforce food safety and quality techniques through Serving it Safe training workshops. These workshops will key in on dairy handling to insure a quality product is presented on the lunch line to students.

In addition, school food service directors will have access to the Cold is Cool! Milk Handling Workshop Video Kit. To build on these principles, Milk Temperature Quality Assurance program materials will be provided free of charge to directors by request. These materials include digital thermometers and data recording sheets for tracking milk temperature. The audits will aid in determining which school will receive the non-electric milk coolers, electric coolers and milk curtain Curtrons.

According to Carolyn Weaver, nutrition education specialist for ADA/DC Middle Atlantic, school food service staff learned through the program the importance of monitoring milk temperatures throughout the day.

"The only way to guarantee that the milk is cold is to check the temperature when it arrives at the school and at the beginning of each lunch period," Weaver said. "The bottom line is that students will not drink milk that is not ice cold. The milk temperature kits provide the tools and incentive to maintain optimal quality."

Rounding out school fund service focus enabled by the grant, the School Food Service Advisory Council, created in the 1998-99 school year with funding from PDA, will be continued during the 1999-2000 school year to identify key issues affecting school lunch programs. This council contains past and current presidents of the Pennsylvania School Foodservice Association, an American School Foodservice Association executive board member and foundation member, representatives from PDA and the Pennsylvania Department of Education and other prominent school food service directors in Pennsylvania.

Workshop Set On Agriculture, Environmental Laws

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Agricultural educators and others who help young farmers understand the interplay of food production and environmental protection can attend a two-day workshop sponsored by Penn State's Dickinson School of Law and College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Environmental Law and Regulation Applied to Agriculture" is scheduled at Dickinson's Agricultural Law Research and Education Center in Carlisle June 20-21. The workshop will highlight how state and federal environmental agencies manage and monitor agricultural activities.

High school vocational agriculture teachers and educators, cooperative extension faculty and staff, and high school science and government teachers are encouraged to attend.

John Becker, Penn State professor of agricultural economics and one of the workshop's instructors, explained that he and Ag Law Center executive director Christine Kellett hope to capitalize on the special role that vocational agriculture teachers play in helping young and older farmers learn about their industry and the issues that influence it.

"By virtue of their contacts with current and future agricultural producers, helping these teachers to understand the issues will help them teach many students, who, in turn, will meet their regulatory requirements," he said. "A similar multiplication of effort and potential impact happens with extension staff."

The workshop will cover several topics, including traditional solutions to environmental problems, right-to-farm laws, state and federal sources of regulatory authority, the Clean Water Act, EPA/USDA Unified Strategy For Dealing With Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, regulation of activities taking place on wetlands, regulation of the sale and use of pesticides, and food safety-/biotechnology.

Registration fee for the course, which is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is $25. Successful completion of the workshop and a take-home exam will earn registrants enrolled in a graduate-degree program one credit through Penn State. High school vocational agriculture teachers will be given priority because of limited space.

For more information, contact the Ag Law Center by phone at (717) 241-3517 or by e-mail at aglaw@psu.edu, or visit the center's World Wide Web site at http://www.dsl.edu/aglaw.html.

Vegetable Supplemental Herbicide Labels for 2000

Mike Orzolek,
Department of Horticulture
Penn State

PDA has approved a 24 (c)"Special local Needs" registration for the use of Matrix herbicide on transplanted tomato in Pennsylvania.

Matrix (rimsulfuron) from DuPont will give selective control of certain broad leave weeds and grasses when applied at 1.0 ounce per acre rate. It is recommended that Matrix be tank mixed with Sencor (metribuzin) at the rate of 2.0 ounces per acre as a postemergence application 1-3 days after transplanting tomato.

If a second flush of weeds would appear after the initial application of Matrix/Sencor, a second application of the Matrix and Sencor tank mix could be made 14 to 18 days later at the 1.0 ounce per acre rate. Matrix applied postemergence will control the following weeds: volunteer barley, barnyardgrass, annual bluegrass, foxtails, fall panicum, quackgrass (4 inches to 8 inches tall), volunteer wheat, common chickweed, henbit, kochia, mustards, pigweeds, Shepherd's purse, and wild radish. Matrix applied postemergence will also give partial control of the following weeds: Canada thistle (small actively growing thistle), cocklebur, common lambs- quarters, ivyleaf morningglory, hairy nightshade, common purslane, common ragweed, Pennsylvania smartweed, and velvetleaf.

Precautions: Do not apply Matrix within 45 days to harvest, do not exceed 3.0 ounces of Matrix per acre per year, do not use in Matrix in a spray solution or spray additive that reduces water pH below 4.0, and do not apply Matrix through any type of irrigation system.

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association holds the registration for the use of Matrix on tomato in Pennsylvania. To obtain a label for the use of Matrix on tomato, contact Bill Troxell, Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers' Association, at (717) 694-3596.