

What On Earth Is A Pasture Walk?

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A postcard in the mail, a flier at the fertilizer dealer, or an announcement in a newsletter announces an upcoming "Pasture Walk." What on earth is a pasture walk? you wonder.

A pasture walk is an opportunity to visit a grazing operation,

visit with other farmers interested in grazing, and to learn.

"Go with an open mind and learn all you can," said Frank Lucas, Natural Resources Conservation Services project leader for the Pequea-Mill Creek Watershed in Lancaster County.

One upcoming pasture walk is at the Roman Stoltzfoos farm in Kinzer, Lancaster County, Aug. 3-4.

At a recent pasture walk in Adams County, topics discussed included herd health, plant

palatability, forage quality, extending the growing season, supplemental feed, fencing, watering systems, soil health, and "the bottom line."

Both experienced and novice graziers will attend. Through nonformal discussion and demonstration, producers can gain a wealth of knowledge.

"You keep experimenting and learning. Never assume you've done enough," Dave Forgey, a rotational grazer with eight years of experience from New York.

Frank Lucas, NRCS, advises not to adopt all the new ideas at once.

"You don't have to convert the whole farm. Start slow with a few paddocks and see how you like it."

Titus Martin of Franklin County agreed. "If you are a dairy farmer interested in grazing, start with your heifers and dry cows. That way your paycheck won't be affected while you are experimenting, getting your feet wet."

The pasture walk provides an

ideal opportunity for the novice to learn from more experienced graziers.

In addition to attending a pasture walk, you may want to do a little reading on the subject of rotational grazing. The "Penn State Agronomy Guide 1999-2000," section 8, contains extensive facts and data relating to pasturing, and "Agronomy Facts 43: Four Steps in Rotational Grazing" explains the concept, provides recommendations, and gives examples of calculations.

Contact your local extension office for more details.

The next opportunity for you to attend a Pasture Walk/Field Day is Aug. 3-4. The same topics will be covered on both days.

The walk is at Roman Stoltzfoos's farm in Kinzer. Roman is a well-known organic dairy farmer who practices rotational grazing. The pasture is a major feed source for the cows.

Topics will include soils, grass species, test plot results, water quality, alternative treatments for animals, breeding, and demonstration of vacuum silage.

Contact Roman Stoltzfoos at 610-593-2415 for more information.

The York County Conservation District is willing to provide transportation to the event. Call Shelly at 717-755-2966, ext. 107 for transportation details.

USDA Establishes Volume Regulation To Assist Cranberry Industry

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The USDA has announced a final rule regulating the volume of cranberries that can be marketed during the 2000-2001 crop year.

A producer allotment of 85 percent will be implemented for the new season beginning Sept. 1 to stabilize plummeting prices due to expanding production and mounting inventories.

The allotment establishes the quantity of cranberries that handlers may purchase from, or handle for growers.

The industry's Cranberry Marketing Committee met on June 6 to discuss three options offered in the proposed rule published May 30, with a comment period ending June 14. At this meeting the committee recommended an alternative option incorporating aspects from the three proposed options.

USDA is adopting the committee's June 6 recommendation with two changes. The first change would continue to allow excess fresh cranberries to be exported. The second change would recognize established growers' sales of cranberries from recently planted acreage. Details of these changes are contained in the final rule.

The final rule establishes a marketable quantity of 5.468 million barrels and an allotment percentage of 85 percent. Total growers' sales histories were set at 6.432 million barrels.

The allotment percentage equals the marketable quantity divided by the total of all growers' sales histories. Fresh and organically-grown cranberries are exempt from the volume limitations to facilitate market-

ing of these products. Imports are not regulated under the marketing order.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, which oversees the Cranberry Marketing Order, received 131 comments on the proposed rule. By far, the majority of commenters were cranberry growers.

Seventy-three comments opposed volume regulation in general or opposed a specific portion of the proposals. Fifty-eight comments favored one of the options under consideration.

The final rule will be published in the July 11 Federal Register and can be viewed at www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the cranberry industry have worked together in considering the best options to address the oversupply situation," said Enrique E. Figueroa, deputy under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs.

Kathleen A. Merrigan, administrator for USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said, "In view of the difficult circumstances faced by the cranberry industry and the many variables considered, USDA determined that this option is the most equitable means of establishing volume regulation at this time."

The eight-member Cranberry Marketing Committee, appointed by the secretary of agriculture, oversees the Cranberry Marketing Order that regulates shipments of cranberries grown in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Washington, and Long

Island, N.Y.

Cranberry production in 1999 reached an all-time high of 6.39 million barrels (one barrel equals 100 pounds of cranberries) — 17 percent above the previous year and a 377 percent increase since 1960. In the same 40 years, harvested acreage has expanded 76 percent and growers have increased their yields 171 percent. Most domestically produced cranberries — about 95 percent — are processed, while the remainder is shipped to fresh markets.

Consumer demand for cranberries has leveled off in recent

years, with total U.S. sales peaking in 1994 at 4.7 million barrels and dipping to 4.5 million barrels in 1998. Prices have suffered as a result.

Growers have watched prices decline from a peak in 1996 of \$65.90 per barrel to \$38.80 per barrel in 1998, and returns for the 1999 crop are expected to fall below \$30.00. At the same time, inventories have mounted, and the Cranberry Marketing Committee estimates that nearly a year's worth of production is expected to be held in inventory when the current marketing year ends Aug. 31.

Be Prepared For Tougher Poultry Waste Regulations

OCEAN CITY, Md. — Learn the latest technology and information about poultry waste management at the 2000 National Poultry Waste Management Symposium at the Sheraton Fontainebleau Hotel, Ocean City, Maryland, October 16-18.

The symposium is targeted to meet current and future needs of the poultry industry when responsibly dealing with environmental issues.

The program begins with a

general session covering broad topics related to poultry by-products and social issues, followed by concurrent sessions addressing specific issues such as air and water quality, utilization, and marketing alternatives and regulation.

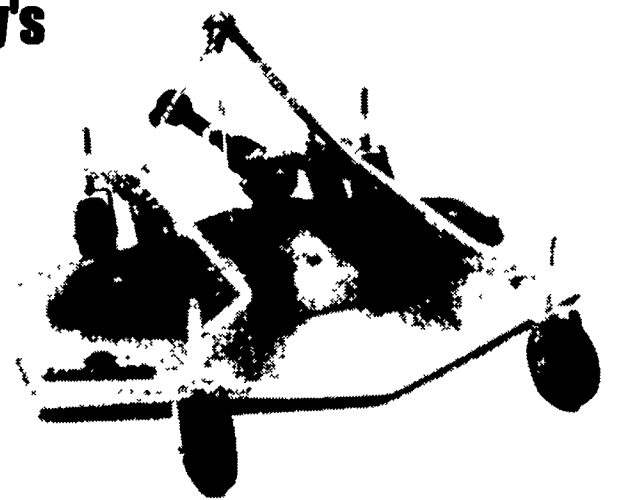
The target audience is mid-level managers, university and allied industry personnel, regulators, growers, and farmers.

Reduced registration is available to encourage producer and student participation.

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