

Ag Progress Days: Major Milestones

ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences has a long tradition of agricultural "field days" dating back to the late 19th Century, when Penn State agricultural specialists traveled to state-sponsored "Farmers Institutes" to demonstrate the latest practices and disseminate research findings and educational information. Following is a brief chronology of events and

milestones that have led to the diverse offerings of the contemporary Ag Progress Days:

- 1951 — Grassland Field Days, the true forerunner of Ag Progress Days, is begun by Penn State Cooperative Extension and Penn State's Agricultural Experiment Station. This series of five regional events, highlighting Pennsylvania's strong grass crop industry, is staged like a traveling show, taking place in different parts of the state over a three-month period. Featured attractions include demonstrations of techniques and equipment for pasture renovation and grass crop production.

- Mid-1960s — Corn overtakes grass as Pennsylvania's top crop, but interest in Grassland Field Days continues to grow. The show is expanded to include plowing contests, experimental forage plots and other features. Now renamed Forage Progress Days, this statewide event is held once a year and rotates to different regions of the commonwealth.

- 1969 — As Forage Progress Days continues to grow in size and scope, covering an ever-wider range of agricultural science and technology, it is renamed Ag Progress Days. The first Ag Progress Days is a two-day event held at Fox Chase Farm in Bradford County. Featured are demonstrations of farm equipment and production techniques, commercial exhibits and youth programs.

- 1971 — Ag Progress Days is expanded to three days and held for the first time at Penn State. The site is the university's agricultural research center at Rock Springs, nine miles southwest of State College on Rt. 45.

- 1976 — Ag Progress Days is conducted at Rockspring for the second time. Because the logistics and infrastructure needs of the event have become too complex and costly to stage the show in a different location each year, the university's agricultural research center becomes the permanent site.

- 1978 — The Pasto Agricultural Museum is dedicated at the Ag Progress Days site.

- 1991 — Equine events and exhibits take place at Ag Progress Days for the first time.

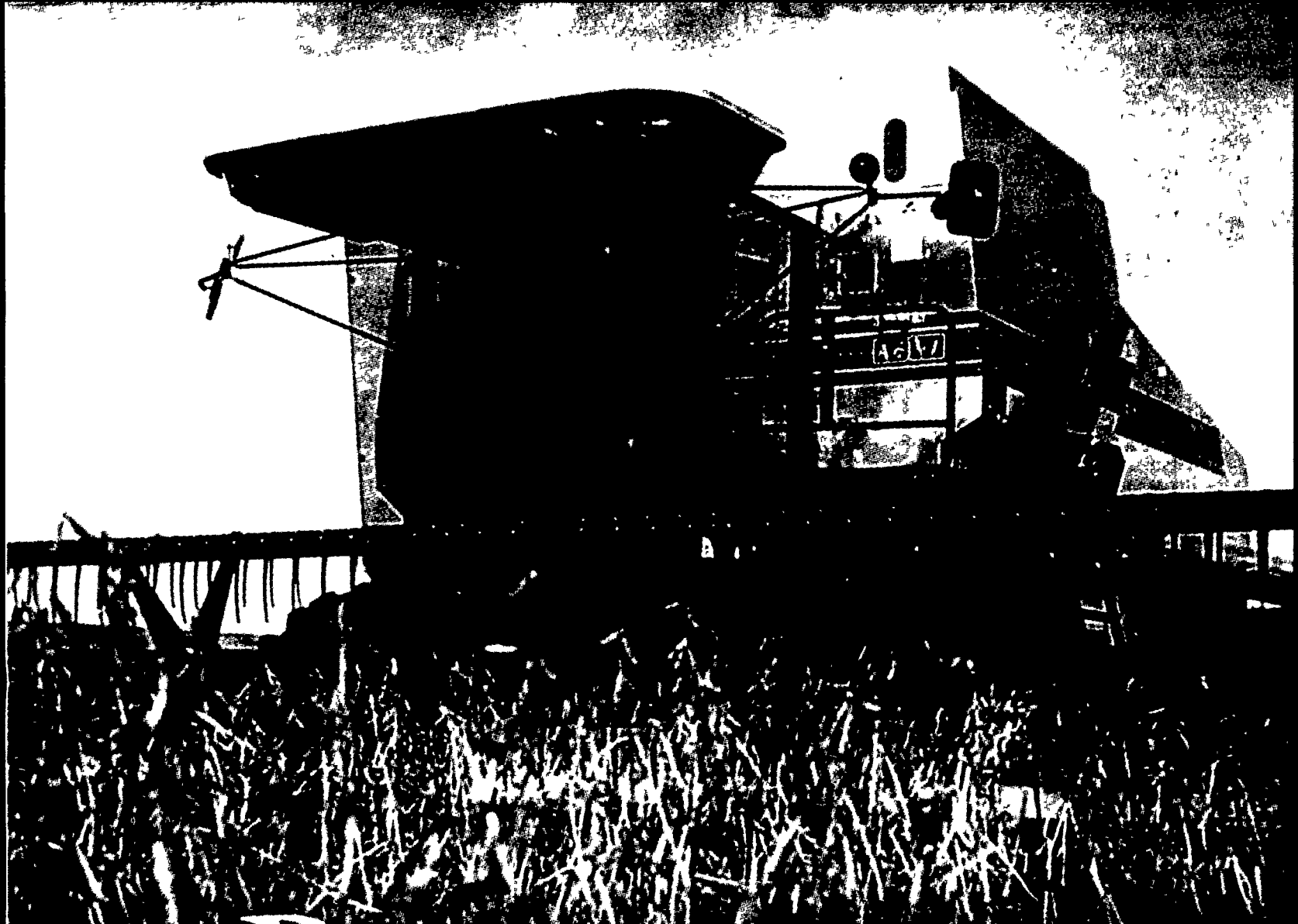
- 2000 — The 32nd annual Ag Progress Days exposition takes place at Penn State's Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center at Rockspring, Aug. 15-17.

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