

# Hunters, Their Hosts Must Keep Safety In Mind

**UNIVERSITY PARK** (Centre Co.) — When Pennsylvania deer season begins Nov. 27, an estimated one million hunters will head for the woods.

Both hunters and landowners need to keep safety in mind, said an expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Many hunters use the property of farmers and other landowners," said Earle Robbins, Tioga County extension director for Penn State Cooperative Extension and certified hunting safety instructor. "Cooperation and mutual understanding between hunters and hosts is the

key to keeping everyone involved safe and satisfied."

If hunters are guests on your property this year, make sure they are responsible and mature. "If you have any doubts about the behavior of hunters who ask to use your land, it's probably best to say 'no,'" Robbins warned. "Make sure your guests know how you expect the land to be treated and ask if they have any questions about the property or your expectations."

Check your property before letting anyone use it. "Walk around your land before the season starts and look for hazards," Robbins said. "Your guests aren't as familiar with your land as you are, so you may see dangers they wouldn't. Warn hunters about hazards and post warning signs if needed. If you want parts of your land left alone, say so."

Hunters never should assume they have a right to hunt on property not posted with "no trespassing" signs. "Always ask permission to hunt on private

property," Robbins said. "Hunting and trapping are privileges in Pennsylvania. A license does not entitle you to trespass on private lands."

If you get permission, ask the landowner about potential hazards on the property and whether any sections are off-limits. "Always obey the owner's rules and respect his or her property," Robbins said. "Behave the way you would like a guest to behave in your home."

Hunters must strictly follow Pennsylvania Game Commission rules on safety. "Wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest, and back," Robbins said.

"Camouflage fluorescent orange may satisfy this regulation if the total orange content is at least 250 square inches. Remember that it's illegal to hunt within 150 yards of any occupied residence, camp, industrial or commercial building, school or playground without permis-

sion. Always follow basic gun safety rules. "Handle a gun as if it's loaded, even if you're positive it's not," he said. "It's an extremely bad idea to cross a fence or stream with a loaded firearm. Unload it and place it through the fence before you go over or under. Never stand a loaded gun against a tree, wall or vehicle where it could be knocked over and discharged. Unload it and place it on a flat surface instead."

Finally, Robbins advises hunters and their hosts to promote safety by reporting violations and injuries to the Pennsylvania Game Commission as soon as possible.

"If you have questions about specific hunting regulations, contact the game commission."

Robbins also recommends "A Digest of Pennsylvania Hunting and Trapping Regulations," published by the game commission. "It's an excellent summary of regulations and offers many safe hunting tips," he said.

## Glickman

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have declined for three consecutive years, and are now at their lowest level since 1991.

About 80,000 dairy farmers across the country will receive an average of \$8,300 each. The maximum payment per farmer will be capped at \$25,000.

Overall, USDA expects to distribute more than twice as much dairy market loss assistance this year as it has in the last two years combined.

"America's small- and medium-sized dairy farms need this help to survive," said Glickman.

Estimates indicate that Wisconsin dairy farmers will receive about \$137 million. New York farmers will receive an estimated \$60 million. Minnesota is expected to receive about \$56 million. USDA will distribute an estimated \$51 million in California and \$48.5 million in Pennsylvania.

In addition, Glickman announced a major expansion of USDA's Dairy Options Pilot Program. This innovative cost-share program helps dairy farmers put a "floor" under the price they receive for milk using the futures and options markets.

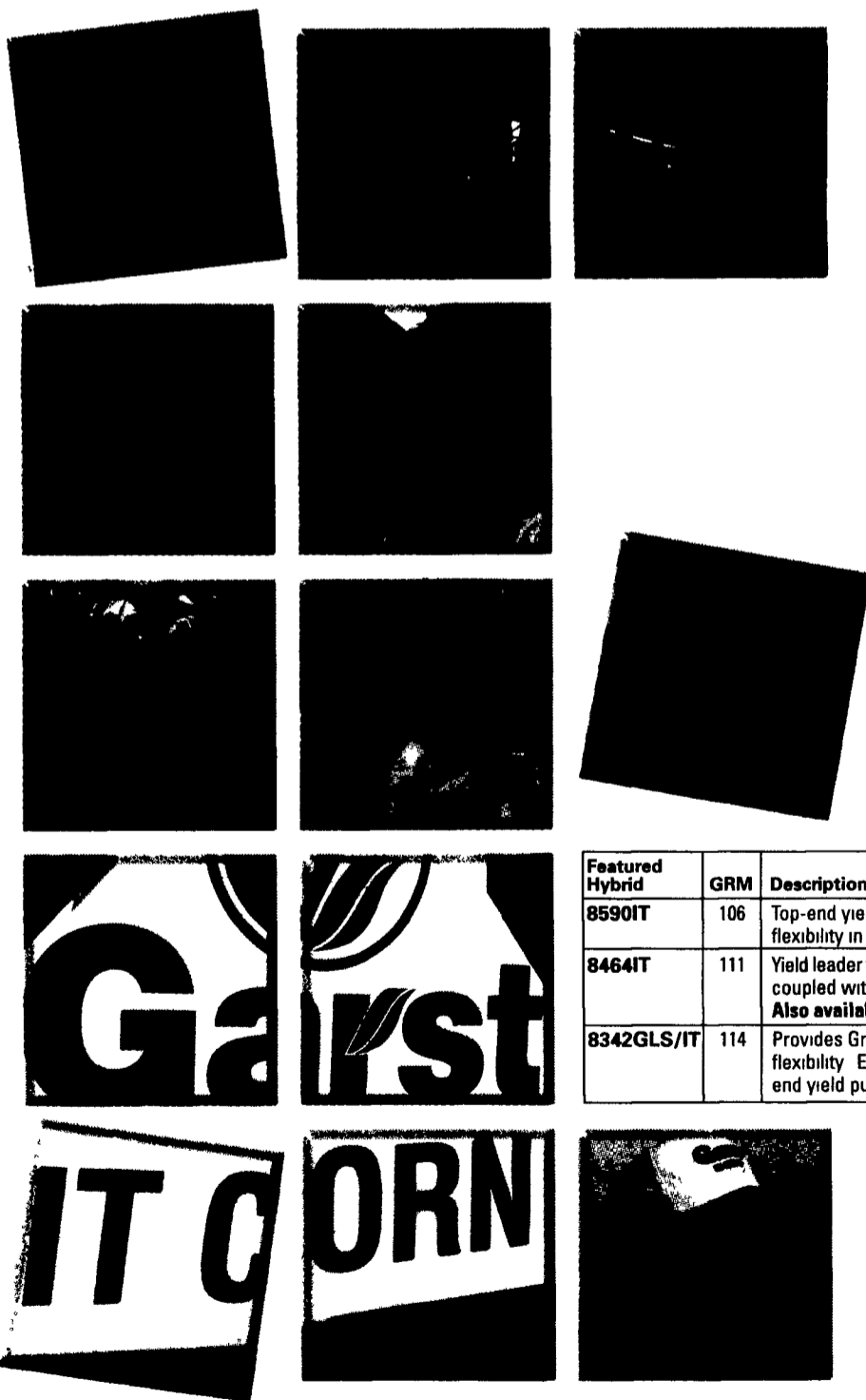
USDA subsidizes both premiums and brokerage fees for participating dairy farmers. USDA will spend about \$24 million over the next two years expanding this program, but the innovative approach used will allow dairy farmers to leverage significantly more protection against price drops. The program, currently operating in 61 counties, will expand to 300 counties in 39 states.

The market loss assistance payments will be made to dairy farmers who received payments in the last two years as well as new producers. In an effort to speed payments and eliminate the need for a sign-up, payments to previous participants will be automatically calculated based on 1997 or 1998 production levels, whichever are higher.

In order to better target small to medium-sized producers,

payment calculations for all participants will be limited to the first 39,000 CWT of production. All dairy farmers will receive the same payment rate. Further details are expected to be announced next month. Payments are expected to go out within the next few months.

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