

## Biotechnology Conference To Develop Community Leaders

ITHACA, N.Y. — Biotechnology refers to a wide-ranging group of issues, including genetically modified foods, using animals to grow human transplant organs, cloning, genomics, and more.

Advances in biotechnology have raised serious ethical, moral, legal, and religious issues for some. For others, biotechnology represents a tremendous opportunity to improve the quality of life. On January 17 through January 19, 2001, in Binghamton, New York, a conference entitled "Biotechnology: Progress or Problem?" will explore the varying perspectives on biotechnology, with an emphasis on agricultural biotechnology and leadership development.

The conference is designed for leaders in communities, agriculture, government, academia, and industry who are wrestling with the question of when to say yes and when to exercise caution in accepting, promoting, or implementing new biotechnology developments.

The conference will begin at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17, with several presentations, including a presentation on ethical issues intended to build the knowledge base of participants. After additional presentations on Thursday, January 18, there will be three discussion sessions entitled "Our Future Food: Quantity, Quality, and Choices"; "Benefits and Drawbacks for Small Farms"; and "Environment: Risks and Benefits."

Each discussion session will begin with two speakers that have differing views on the issue. Then the audience will discuss and document their concerns and questions. The results will be merged for all the groups and reviewed the following day. The conference wraps up with a series of presentations discussing consumer decision making, media coverage of biotechnology, and government regulations. The conference ends at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, January 19.

Those that register for the conference are invited to propose a

poster or display presentation for a reception Wednesday evening. Posters are intended to show the range of biotechnology research. Posters describing alternatives, concerns, or philosophical perspectives will also be considered.

Conference speakers were chosen to provide background information on biotechnology and to reflect the range of opinions that exist concerning biotechnology. Eighteen speakers will present lectures at the conference.

The registration fee is \$145 if postmarked on or before December 27, 2000, and \$185 if postmarked after December 27 or at the door.

The conference will be held at the Best Western Binghamton Regency Hotel and Conference Center. For a conference brochure or additional information, contact NRAES, 152 Riley-Robb Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853-5701; phone (607) 255-7654; fax (607) 254-8770; or E-mail nraes@cornell.edu. Conference information is also posted on the NRAES Web site [www.nraes.org](http://www.nraes.org).

## Allen Elected Beef Council Chairperson

MIDDLETOWN (Dauphin Co.) — Kathy Allen, a beef producer from Saxonburg, Pennsylvania, was elected Chairperson of the Pennsylvania Beef Council at their annual reorganizational meeting.

The Butler County producer previously served as Beef Council vice president. Kathy and her husband John operate a 1000-acre farm where they run 300 registered Anus and Short-horn cows.

The new chairperson brings numerous leadership experiences to the Beef Council including: National Chairperson and Delegate to the National Shorthorn

Association; consultant to the state department on international trade; member of the Butler County Chamber of Commerce and Butler County Leadership Council; and 4-H volunteer. Allen also won the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association Seedstock Producer of the Year award.

William Leshar, a dairy producer from Berks County, was elected Vice Chairperson of the Board. Regina Bagley, veal producer/feed dealer, from Shunk, Sullivan County, was elected Secretary of the Board, while Bob Livingston, a beef producer from Sevens Valley, York County, was elected Treasurer of

the Board.

Joining the Board as newly elected Directors are James Work, a beef producer from Fayette County; Eugene Wingert, a beef producer from Franklin County; Kenneth Teel, a dairy producer from Wyoming County; Steve Holland, a packer/processor from Blair County; John Teretenko, a market representative from Snyder County; Dr. John Comerford, Penn State University Ex-Officio representative; Ron Miller, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Ex-Officio representative and Dr. Michael Schegel, Delaware Valley College, Ex-Officio representative.

## Here Are Tips For Buying, Storing, And Planting Balled Trees

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The tree in your living room this Christmas could beautify the landscape surrounding your house for years to come.

Live trees are an excellent way to remember past holidays, but require a little more planning and care than cut Christmas trees, said Ohio State University Extension forestry specialist Randy Heiligmann.

The live trees, called balled trees because their root system is wrapped in a soil-filled burlap ball, are brought inside the house and decorated like any other Christmas tree. Once Christmas is over they can be planted outside to beautify the yard.

Heiligmann offers these tips to follow before buying a balled tree:

- Decide where it will be planted once it is removed from the house. Remember, most Christmas tree varieties have the potential to grow in excess of 60 feet, so don't plant them where their growth could cause problems.

- Decide how the balled tree will be transported, both by vehicle and into the house, and have a couple people available to help. The combined weight of the tree and root ball will be in excess of 100-pounds.

- Measure the balled tree from the base of the ball to the top of the tree to be sure it will fit in the room you want it. It is usually not desirable to shorten balled trees once they have been purchased.

- Dig the hole where the tree is to be planted before Christmas, when the soil is not frozen. The hole should be one and one-fourth as wide as the ball. Generally, 18 to 22-inches is a safe diameter. It might be good to get the tree and look at the size of the ball before digging the hole. Spread mulch or straw over the dug soil to prevent it from freezing before the tree is planted.

Heiligmann has these suggestions for storing a balled tree before bringing it into the house:

- Keep the root ball moist and handle it carefully to avoid damaging or breaking the ball.

- Store the tree in a

shaded area, protected from heavy winds. The outside wall of an unheated garage is an ideal location.

- Wrap the ball with a plastic bag before bringing it into the house to avoid spills.

Once the tree is in the house, follow these tips for care and maintenance:

- The tree should be in the house for only five to seven days. If left inside more than a week, it could begin to lose its winter dormancy and die once taken back outside in the cold. The less time the tree spends in the house the better.

- The ball should not dry out or be over watered. Water the root ball every two or three days. Set the ball in a pan and cover the carpet underneath with plastic or a rug to avoid spills. If the ball is over watered, it will fall apart.

- Do not put the tree in front of a sunny window or near a fireplace or warm register. Reduce the temperature in the room to 65 degrees or as low as comfortable. Use smaller Christmas lights that give off less heat. These techniques help prevent the tree from losing winter dormancy.

When planting a balled tree, follow these rules:

- It's not necessary, but sometimes helpful, to cut holes in the burlap once the root ball is placed in the hole. This may make it easier for the roots to grow out of the ball.

- The top of the ball should be level with or slightly above the soil surface, and the soil dug from the hole should be refilled around the ball. It is important to eliminate air pockets around the ball, so remember to periodically tamp the soil down and make it firm while planting the tree.

- If the weather is warm, water the tree.

- Once the hole is filled, cover the soil with four-inches of mulch in a three- to four-foot diameter circle around the base of the tree. This keeps the soil from freezing and allows the tree's roots to take up water.

- Plant the tree where it will be protected from winter wind. This will keep it from drying out.

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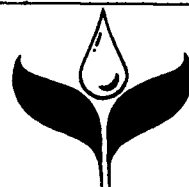
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