

## USDA Announces Programs For Apple Growers, Wool And Mohair

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The USDA recently announced that sign-up for the Apple Market Loss Assistance (AMLA) and Wool and Mohair Loss Assistance (WMLA) programs have begun.

USDA also announced details on how to receive grazing payments in lieu of loan deficiency payments for the 2001 crop year.

**Apples:** Under the AMLA, about \$100 million will be used to provide assistance to eligible growers for their 1998 and 1999 apple production. The payments will help offset economic losses because of low prices in the U.S. apple market. Growers can receive a payment per pound for the higher of either 1998 or 1999 apple production, and they will be paid on a maximum of 1.6 million pounds per separate apple operation.

To receive cash payments, eligible apple producers must: (1) have produced and harvested apples during the 1998 and/or 1999 crop year; (2) not have received compensation from any other federal program, other than crop insurance, for the same market

loss; and (3) apply for cash payments during the application period for each apple operation. The deadline for application under the AMLA program will be announced later.

**Wool and Mohair:** USDA also will pay eligible wool and mohair procedures who suffered economic loss because of prices about \$20 million for the 2000 marketing year. The payment rate will not exceed 40 cents per pound.

Producers wanting to participate in the wool and mohair program must file an application for payment by April 13, 2001. Eligible wool or mohair must have been shorn in the U.S. and livestock must have been owned for

30 days or more prior to shearing. The wool or mohair must have been produced during the 2000 marketing year.

**Grazing:** USDA can now begin payments to eligible producers who elect to use acreage planted to wheat, barley, or oats to graze livestock and give up any other harvesting. The payment will be determined using the loan deficiency payment rate in effect as of the date the agreement.

For more details on these and other USDA programs, contact a USDA Service Center or Farm Service Agency county office. Office locations are in the government section of the telephone directory.

## Income Opportunities For Rural Areas Conference March 31

**CHAMBERSBURG** (Franklin Co.) — Penn State Cooperative Extension, in cooperation with the Small Business Development Center at Kutztown, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, and Ben Franklin Technology Partners has announced the upcoming program, "Income Opportunities for Rural Areas." The conference is scheduled Saturday, March 31, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Adams County Cooperative Extension office in Gettysburg.

This conference is an opportunity to explore a number of nontraditional agriculture-related businesses with an eye on enterprise startup.

If you are seeking to get started in some kind of agricultural business or diversify your present operation with another, this conference is the place for you.

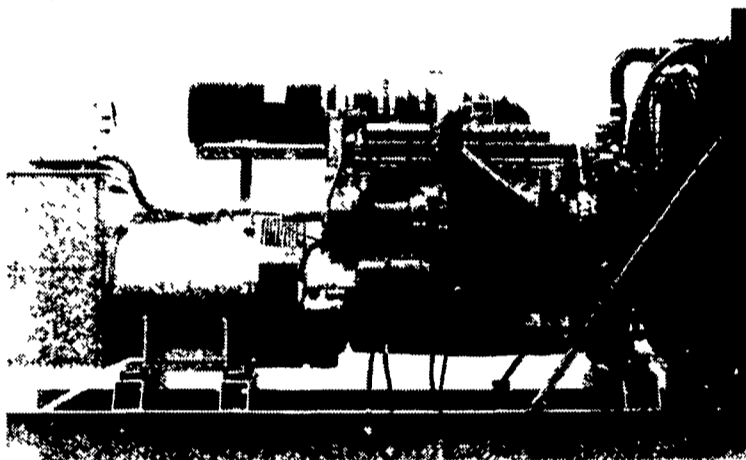
Some of the best, most experienced speakers in their areas will be presenting at this conference. A few of the conference enterprise topics: medicinal plants, herbs, greenhouse-based businesses, berries, farm vacations, cut flowers, vegetable production, nursery crops, and more.

Business topics such as legal issues, financing your venture, and marketing are all part of the morning plenary session.

The cost of the program is \$25 per person and includes all handout materials, lunch, and break snacks (there may be some additional fee-based publications available). Pre-registration is required.

For information, contact Steve Bogash, Franklin County Cooperative Extension (717) 263-9226. Registration forms will also be available from the Adams and Cumberland county extension offices.

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