

University Correspondence Course Focuses On Forestry Basics

WESTMINSTER, Md. — Landowners, farmers and other folks interested in forestry can learn to manage their wood lots for timber products, wildlife and overall forest health by taking a General Forestry Correspondence Course developed by Maryland Cooperative Extension specialists at the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Registrations are being accepted now for the fall semester.

The General Forestry Correspondence Course provides the basics of forestry, forest ecology and forest health. Studying in the comfort of their home, students learn how to protect trees from insects, diseases and fire, and explore the details of the forestry business, including tax nuances and the sale and harvest of forest products. They can use their own property, a friend's forest or nearby public lands to apply practical exercises in forest management. Ultimately, the course exercises help them develop an actual forest management plan.

The General Forestry Correspondence Course is presented as a notebook of lessons and supple-

mental readings. Its six units each contain several lessons with questions at the end of each unit. Maryland Cooperative Extension experts at the university's Wye Research and Education Center correct answers and return them throughout the course, so students have constant feedback.

As part of the \$150 registration fee, learners receive a General Forestry Correspondence Course text notebook and a separate appendices packed with resources. Supplemental readings provided include A Sand County Almanac, The Woodland Steward: A Practical Guide to the Management of Small Private Forests and American Forests: A History of Resiliency and Recovery. A certificate of completion is awarded when all assignments are completed.

For more information or to register, contact Bob Tjaden or Tawna Mertz at the Wye Research and Education Center, P.O. Box 169, Queenstown, MD 21658; phone: (410) 827-8056; e-mail: rt20@umail.umd.edu or tm177@umail.umd.edu.

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — The annual Boar Performance testing program and the Ram Performance testing program of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Meat Animal Evaluation Center (MAEC) are well under way, according to Glenn Eberly, director.

All 20 boar pens at the center are occupied. The current group of boars includes 39 Yorkshires, nine Durocs, three Hampshires, three Poland China's, three Berkshires, and three Hampshire sired X-breeds.

Eberly said the boars are growing well and will remain on test until the average weight of their pen reaches 250 pounds. After completing the testing period, the boars will be scanned with real-time ultra-sound and will be

evaluated for soundness by a committee of producers and swine extension specialists.

The 26th annual Pennsylvania Performance Tested Boar Sale is scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 15, at 6 p.m. in the Ag Arena on the Penn State campus. The sale date falls during Ag Progress Days.

The 88 rams on test are gaining extremely well, thus far. This group consists of 28 fall-born Dorsets, 21 junior Dorsets, 22 junior Suffolks, nine junior Hampshires, four senior Suffolks, two Shropshires, one Oxford, and one senior Hampshire. After completing their 84-day testing program, the rams will be evaluated for breeding soundness, structural correctness and breed character. They will also be scanned ultrasonically to de-

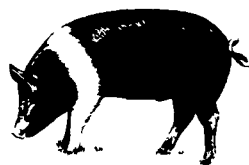
termine fat thickness and loin-eye area. Final indexes will be calculated based on average daily gain, feed efficiency and fat thickness.

The 23rd annual Performance Tested Ram Sale is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 4, in Penn State's Ag Arena. The Pennsylvania Sheep Producers Field Day committee is planning a tremendous program for Saturday, Aug. 4 in conjunction with the Ram Sale and Invitational Ewe Sale.

The Meat Animal Evaluation Center is a cooperative effort through Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Penn State, and livestock organizations.

For further information or to request sale catalogs, contact Glenn Eberly, director, MAEC, 651 Fox Hollow Road, State College, PA 16803; phone (814) 238-2527 or (814) 865-5857.

Pa. Boar And Ram Performance Testing Under Way



Cattlemen To Address USDA's Faulty Price Reporting

Washington, D.C. — The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) recently met with USDA officials to address concerns raised as the result of the agency's inaccurate price reports on beef cut-out values.

USDA Secretary Ann Veneman requested a review of the livestock reporting system, which has been reporting inaccurate price reports since its induction April 2.

Lynn Cornwell, NCBA president, noted that beef producers may have used the inaccurate information for six weeks prior to the USDA's announcement earlier this week reporting that

the numbers were incorrect.

Thousands of contracts and cattle sales rely on the information in the reports, which were stating lower than market value prices for the sales.

This mistake questions USDA's integrity and threatens producer confidence in the marketplace, according to Cornwell. Potentially, it could cost producers millions of dollars.

According to USDA officials, products that were not quality graded, known as "no-roll," were mistakenly included into prices reported for select and choice box-beef. USDA attributes the error to a software problem.

Among the concerns that will be addressed by NCBA in its meeting with USDA include:

1. USDA's plans to address losses experienced by producers.
2. NCBA's need for assurances and guarantees that future prices reported will be accurate and truly reflective of the market.
3. Information on when the problems started and correct information on prior marketing information to allow producers to accurately define their losses.
4. Assurances that NCBA will be informed of other potential system weaknesses.

NYBIC Trains Meat Managers At Tops Friendly Markets

WESTMORELAND, N.Y. — Over 350 meat and seafood professionals at Tops Friendly Markets attended a Beef College training session sponsored by the beef industry.

In conjunction with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Pennsylvania Beef Council, and Ohio Beef Council, the New York Beef Industry Council (NYBIC) coordinated a seminar to teach meat department employees the basics of beef.

The presentation began with a consumer overview, discussing how customers are unfamiliar with anatomy and how retailers need to help them in purchasing the correct cut of beef to suit their needs. Today's consumers only know four cuts: steak, ground beef, chicken breast and pork chops. By helping them to use the right cut of

beef, retailers are ensuring a positive eating experience every time.

Additionally, women (the primary meal preparers) are starved for time and it's important that meat department staff members recognize how convenience items can be part of a quick and nutritious meal. The attendees were later invited to try their hands at preparing beef stir-fry and grilled top blade steaks.

With a bite to eat in their stomachs, the session continued with a discussion on beef's power pack of nutrients: zinc, iron, and protein. Finally, the program concluded with a presentation on the components of beef, including a segment on tenderness, marbling, and quality grades.



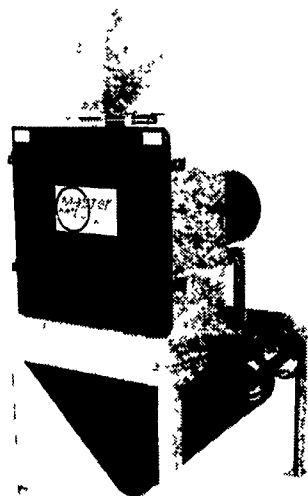
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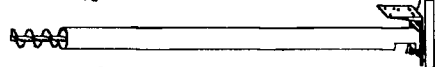


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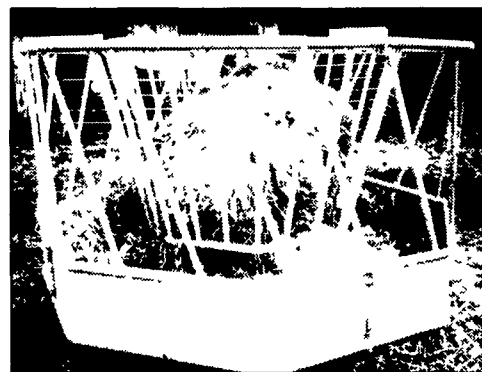
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