

Lancaster Growers Hear Crop, Soil Updates

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — When it comes to life in the soil, "more is better," according to Soil Agent Mark Goodson.

Goodson was one of a group of agents who updated growers on a variety of topics at the Lancaster County Crops and Soils Day here Thursday.

He gave an overview of the vast array of organisms in healthy soil, including earthworms, nematodes, numerous species of mites and insects, hun-

dreds of fungi, and thousands of species of bacteria and other microorganisms.

"Think of your soil as an ecosystem," Goodson said.

The top six inches on an acre of healthy soil can have as many as 15,000 pounds of fungus biomass, according to Goodson.

Much of that fungus is crucial to plant growth by intertwining with the roots of crops and drawing nutrients and minerals from the surrounding soil to help feed the plant.

Earthworms, insects, and other

microorganisms also play important roles in maintaining a healthy soil for crop production.

The amount of life in the soil can be gauged from the organic matter percentage given on soil test results. Growers should pay attention to that percentage, Goodson said. Healthy levels of organic matter help anchor and supply air and water for roots, furnish nutrients, and release water with low levels of nutrients.

"There's a lot going on in that number in your soil test," he said.

Adding organic matter in the form of manure or compost to fields and avoiding repeated applications of pesticides toxic to soil organisms are two practices that encourage soil life. Integrated pest management (IPM) is an important part of maintaining the soil ecosystem, Goodson said.

Lime applications can also increase microbial activity, he pointed out.

Other topics throughout the day included soil compaction, the phosphorus index, soybean production research, corn stand uniformity, and an update on the latest invaders of soybeans.

Pest Management Agent Del Voight noted two soybean pests that growers should be on the alert for this growing season.

The bean leaf beetle tends to become a problem after mild winters such as this one, he said.

Another pest to watch for is the soybean aphid, first identified in the area last year.



Crop and soil experts shared their knowledge at the Lancaster County Crops and Soils Day Thursday. Pictured in front, from left, John Yocum, Greg Roth, John Rowehl, and Mark Goodson. In rear, from left, Del Voight, Joe Mayer, Jerry Martin, Sjoerd Duiker.

Topics included the latest invaders of soybeans, bean leaf beetles and soybean aphids; the life and ecosystems found in soil; soil compaction; and the phosphorus index.

USDA Names Counties Eligible For Emergency Farm Loans

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Counties in several eastern states are included in the Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman's announcement of those eligible for USDA emergency farm loans due to losses caused by drought, hail and high winds that occurred last year. The eligibility became effective March 1, 2002.

"This assistance will help farmers recover from natural disasters that hit in their counties last year," said Veneman.

In New York State, 12 counties were reported eligible. Chemung, Seneca and Tioga counties were named as primary disaster areas March 1, 2002. Also eligible because they are contiguous, are Broome, Cayuga, Cortland, Ontario, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne and Yates counties.

In Vermont, 14 counties are eligible. Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Chittenden, Orange, Orleans, Rutland and Washington counties were named as primary disaster areas. Also eligible, because they are contiguous, are Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Windham and Windsor counties.

In Virginia, eight counties were designated eligible. Goochland County was named as a primary disaster area. Also eligible, because they are contiguous, are Chesterfield, Cumberland, Fluvanna, Hanover, Henrico, Louisa and Powhatan counties.

In Tennessee, 13 counties are regarded eligible. Claiborne, Hamblen, Jefferson and Union counties were named as primary disaster areas. Also eligible, because they are contiguous, are Anderson, Campbell, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Knox and Sevier counties.

This designation makes all qualified farm operators in primary and contiguous disaster counties eligible for low-interest EM loans from the Farm Service Agency, provided eligibility requirements are met.

Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of this declaration to apply for the loans to help cover part of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

FSA has a variety of programs available, in addition to the emergency loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

Interested farmers may contact their local FSA offices for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures.

Additional information is also available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/disaster/assistance1.htm>

Produce Auctions To Open In Coming Weeks

EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — It's produce auction time!

Produce auction market season gets under way in the next several weeks. Many are opening in time for bedding plant and materials sales and flower sales in time for Easter.

Following are several auctions and their start-up dates and times:

- Weaverland Produce Auction, New Holland. Begins March 21 and continues every Tuesday and Thursday. For sale: mostly flowers, some produce, local and shipped.

- Kutztown Produce, Fleetwood. Begins March 19 with flowers. The first big nursery sale is Thursday, March 21, from 4 p.m.-6 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday at 10 a.m. thereafter. Saturday features, as usual, hay and straw.

- Lebanon Produce, Reistville. Start-up date is April 17, with flowers, mainly. Auction continues on Tuesdays. Saturday, April 13, begins with a large nursery stock sale, 10 a.m., with 12-15 consignors. A craft sale is under one roof.

- Leola Produce Auction, Leola. Start-up date is Tues-

day, March 19, at 9:30 a.m., and continuing every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30 a.m.


- Snyder's Produce Auction, Port Trevorton. Opened March 8, continues Fridays at 10:30 a.m., and will go to Monday later on. Easter sale is March 22 at 10:30 a.m. with flowers, and occasionally poultry.

- Windmill Produce Auction, Penn Yan, N.Y. Will open April 27 at 8 a.m.

- Kirkwood Produce Auction, Kirkwood. Begins April 25 at 9 a.m. with flowers and bedding plants.

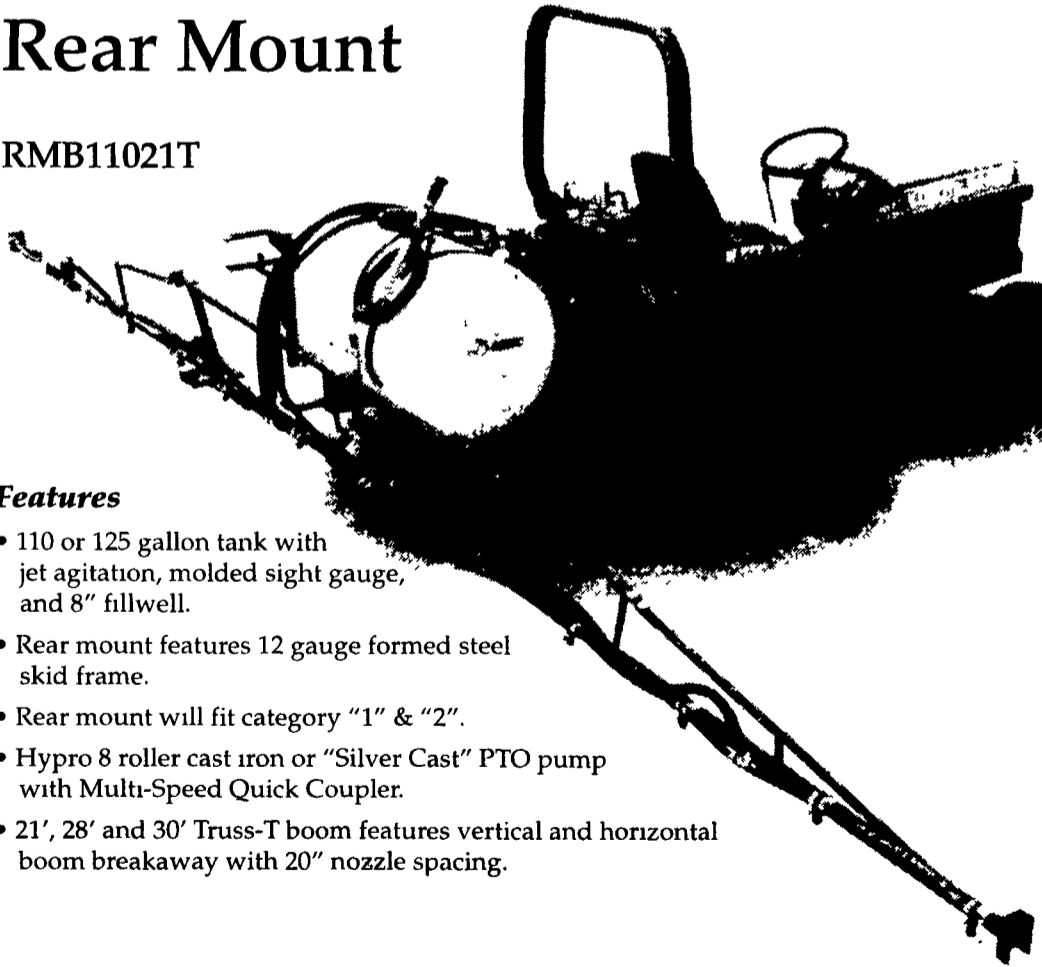
- Shippensburg Produce Auction, Shippensburg. Operates on Tuesdays up to the last week of March, then every Tuesday and Thursday at 9 a.m. Includes flowers, Easter flowers, and 4-inch pots of primrose, hyacinth, pansies, and flats of pansies.

- Buffalo Valley, Richfield. Begins Tuesday, April 16, at 10 a.m., and every Tuesday and Thursday thereafter. Features mostly flowers and bedding plants.



110 or 150 Gallon Rear Mount

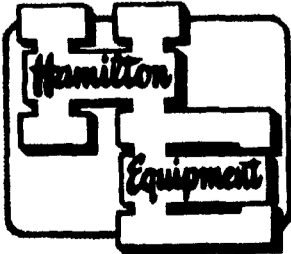
RMB11021T



Features

- 110 or 125 gallon tank with jet agitation, molded sight gauge, and 8" fillwell.
- Rear mount features 12 gauge formed steel skid frame.
- Rear mount will fit category "1" & "2".
- Hypro 8 roller cast iron or "Silver Cast" PTO pump with Multi-Speed Quick Coupler.
- 21', 28' and 30' Truss-T boom features vertical and horizontal boom breakaway with 20" nozzle spacing.

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