

Wool Pools Set

CANTON (Bradford Co.) — In Pennsylvania, the old practice of farmers packing wool into bags for sale to markets has returned.

For the last several years, the market price for wool has been depressed and the cost of grading and packing wool was equal or close to the market price. The co-operatives deductions were almost equal to the gross price for the wool.

To add insult to the low prices, farmers often gave up another day from their busy schedules to help at the wool pool.

During these times of depressed prices, some of the cooperatives have been coordinating trucks that stop at convenient sites near to the sheep farms. The farmers then help each other load

the wool bags onto the truck. When the wool reaches the buyers warehouse, they weigh and grade each producer's wool and send the check directly to the producer.

This system is based on the premise that the buyer must treat producers fairly if he wants to continue a long-term relationship.

This year, the price for wool has increased to the point where the wool pools which grade and pack wool could return to their normal methods. Many cooperatives are electing to use the method of loading bags direct from the producer as a way to return more of the wool money to the producer.

The Potter-Tioga Wool Producers will be collecting wool June 22 at four stops — 8 a.m. at Roulette in Potter County, 10:30 a.m. at Whitneyville Fairgrounds in Tioga County, 1 p.m. at Canton in Bradford County, and 3 p.m. at Doeblers in Lycoming County.

The Northeast cooperative will be picking up wool at 8 a.m. in Laceyville on June 15. Northumberland will be picking up wool at 12:30 p.m. on June 15.

Mifflin County will be picking up wool near Belleville June 25. Centre County will be picking up wool on June 25 at the Grange Fairgrounds.

Cumberland combined pools will be operating June 19 at Carlisle Fairgrounds. Anyone interested should confirm procedures and times with their local directors.

For more information, call Don Norman at (570) 324-3562.



Kids and adults joined in the task of packing large bags with wool that was collected at last year's wool pool.

Lycoming County Man Named 'Conservation Volunteer Of The Year'

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry officials have recognized a Lycoming County resident's continuous years of dedicated volunteer service that began while he was employed in the Tiadaghton State Forest District.

Robert Webber of Slate Run was named "Conservation Volunteer of the Year" in a recent ceremony in the state forestlands that benefited from his volunteerism even before he retired from the Bureau of Forestry in 1988.

"Bob got a head start on many of our dedicated DCNR volunteers who often find increased time after retirement," said John

Plonski, DCNR executive deputy secretary for parks and forestry. "Officially, he has been a volunteer the past 14 years since retiring as a labor foreman, but even while employed by the bureau he volunteered countless hours plowing snow, working on trails, and greeting the public.

Webber is the second individual to be honored this year by DCNR as a "Conservation Volunteer of the Year." Dale Hildebrand of Mountaintop, Luzerne County, was honored April 22 at Nescopeck State Park for devoting more than 100 volunteer hours in 2001 to that park, as well as nearby Lehigh Gorge and Hickory Run state parks.

In 2001, Webber, Hildebrand and hundreds of other conserva-

tion volunteers logged more than 550,000 hours in the state's 116 state parks and 2.1 million acres of state forestland. They helped build trails, clean up debris and trash, serve as hosts or educators, conduct scientific research, and perform other natural resources volunteer work.

Many state parks and forests are looking for volunteers for "spring cleanup" activities. Several parks also are looking for people to serve as campground hosts. Those interested in becoming conservation volunteers can contact any state park or forest district office, or visit DCNR's website through the PA PowerPort at www.state.pa.us/PA, Keywords: "state parks," or "forests."

Program For Turfgrass Technicians Offered

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — A program offered by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences will help meet the needs of the turfgrass and agricultural equipment industry for highly qualified service technicians to keep equipment in top condition.

The Turfgrass and Agricultural Equipment (TAE) Service Technician Certificate program will create technicians for this service area.

"The turfgrass and agricultural equipment industries report shortages of qualified technicians wanting and able to work in the industry," says Doug Schaufler, instructor in the department of agricultural and biological engineering. "The Engine and Equipment Council estimates a shortage of 30,000 qualified technicians."

Developed with input from industry representatives, this two-year certificate program will be

offered at the University Park campus over a two-year sequence of four eight-week sessions. The first session starts in October 2002.

"Offering the TAE program in four eight-week sessions each year allows individuals to work in the turfgrass and agricultural equipment industry when not at school," says Dr. James Hilton, associate professor of agricultural engineering and education.

Sessions will be offered back-to-back. The fall session runs from October through December, and the spring session runs from January through March 2003.

The first year curriculum includes mathematics for turfgrass and agricultural service technicians, hydraulic applications, engine technology, electrical systems, computer basics and applications, safe equipment transport and shop practice, communications and public relations, power transmission applications, turfgrass and agricultural equipment, and business concepts.

The following subjects will be covered during the second year: electronic applications, electro-hydraulics and hydrostatics, agronomy or turfgrass principles, machinery management for turfgrass, written communications and agriculture business applications, inventory management, agricultural equipment operation, shop management, turfgrass and agricultural equipment operation, irrigation systems and water management, power units, traction and weight transfer and diagnostics, repair and maintenance.

Optional workshops may include welding and metal work and repair, painting, inventory control, safety management and other mechanical, business and management concepts.

The curriculum covers more than just engines, hydraulics and electrical systems, according to Hilton. It also includes equipment operation and adjustment, plus computer, business and management skills.

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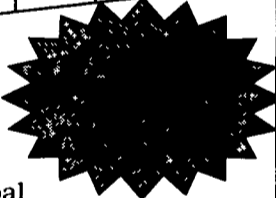
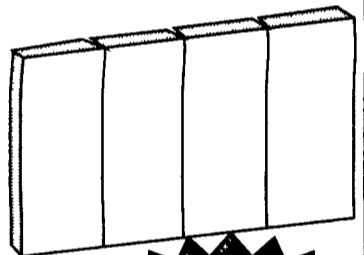
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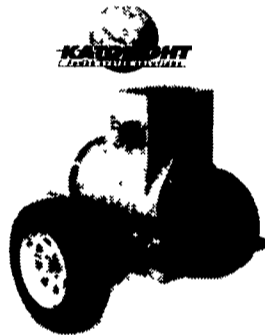


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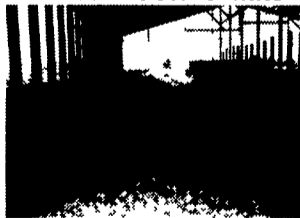


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