

## New Sorghums Thrive Under Typical U.S. Day Length

GRIFFIN, Ga. — New sorghums that flourish under day length conditions typical in the United States could result from a large-scale genetic screening program now being coordinated by Agricultural Research Service scientists and cooperators.

The ARS Plant Genetic

Resources Conservation Unit in Griffin, Ga., under the direction of sorghum coordinator Gary Pederson, provided almost 25,000 sorghum accessions to researchers who then evaluated them for a trait known as photoperiod sensitivity.

Photoperiod—the cycle of light and darkness a plant re-

ceives—is tied to day length, which increases during the long days of the U.S. growing season.

Certain sorghums don't grow well during these long days in the United States. Only sorghum that is insensitive to day length will reach full maturity and produce harvestable seed in this country.

The sorghum accessions tested were obtained from the ARS national "active collection" of sorghum germplasm. In Texas, scientists grew the plants and evaluated them for their photoperiod sensitivity. This was an ARS collaboration with the Sorghum Crop Germplasm Committee, National Grain Sorghum

Producers, and university and industry scientists.

In this cooperative study, scientists determined that 4,193 accessions should be selected because they are less sensitive to day length. That quality was then entered into the Germplasm Resources Information Network for use by researchers worldwide. In spring 2001, seed from these accessions was sent to cooperating private companies so that additional seed could be produced from these plants.

This seed was then sent back to the Griffin lab for processing, cleaning, and counting for distribution

during spring 2002 to sorghum breeders and other interested users. The seeds will be grown out at locations in Texas and Kansas this summer for evaluation.

Distribution of seed allows plant breeders to incorporate new genetic diversity into crops and provides growers with cultivars that have desirable genetic traits for various growing conditions.

The national sorghum collection is evaluated and regenerated at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, and a base collection is maintained in long-term storage at Ft. Collins, Colo.

## PFGC Changes Over The Years

Over the past 40 years there has been one name change and several leadership changes in the Pennsylvania Council as well as the National Organization.

The Pennsylvania Grassland Council (PGC) was organized in 1960 and affiliated with the American Grassland Council (AGC) in 1963. In 1963, as a result of its continued growth and image, and a major organizational change to provide for greater involvement by private industry, the American Grassland Council changed its name to the American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC).

In 1978 the name of the Pennsylvania Grassland Council was also changed to the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council (PFGC) to more fully recognize the Council's role in support of the state's forage-livestock industry.

Dr. John E. Baylor, Penn State's Extension Forage Specialist, was the first president of PGC and Charles Wolgemuth, General Manager Milton Hershey Farms, its first Secretary-Treasurer. Baylor served as President for 2 years at which time he was named the Council's Executive Vice President.

Charles Wolgemuth served as the Council's Secretary-Treasurer until his leave from Milton Hershey Farms in 1968 at which time Richard C. Hann, newly-appointed Superintendent of the Milton Hershey School Farms, was elected as the Council's new Secretary-Treasurer. Hann has continued to serve in that capacity until the present. Recently, in addition to his Secretary-Treasurer responsibilities, he was asked to assume the responsibilities of the Council's Executive Director, a new position.

John E. Baylor retired from Penn State in 1983 but continued to serve as the Council's Executive Vice President for one year when Penn State's new Extension Forage Specialist, Dr. Sidney Bosworth, assumed that position. Bosworth resigned from Penn State in 1989 at which time Dr. Marvin Hall was named Extension Forage Specialist and assumed the role of the Council's Executive Vice President, a position he currently holds.

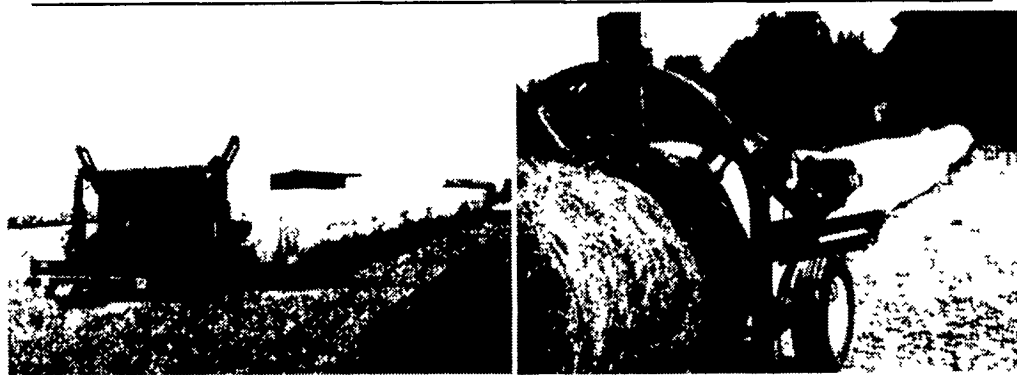
*Excerpted from "The First 40 Years," a Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland Council publication.*



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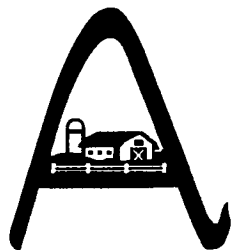
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