Hard Winter Good For Alfalfa Crop

Co.) —All signs indicate a bumper crop of alfalfa across the commonwealth, according to a crop scientist in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Marvin Hall, professor of forage management in the department of crop and soil sciences, says early reports from around the state this spring all point to a great start for alfalfa and other forage crops. And it started, he says, with the winter's substantial snow dumps.

"Forage plants are different than people," Hall said. "They like winter weather that stays cold, and heavy snow cover protects them from severe cold.'

"Mild winter weather that freezes, thaws, then refreezes is the most damaging for forage plants — and alfalfa in particular. Our motto is, 'let it snow, let it snow!' On a scale of one to 10, I'd say this winter was in the 8-to-9 range; I don't expect to see much damage due to winterkill."

He explains that the less-severe winters the state has enjoyed the past few seasons promote a freeze-and-thaw cycle that can expose and tear alfalfa roots. Winterkill is a special problem for alfalfa, which is a perennial.

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Alfalfa stands can overwinter and bounce back to produce forage for as long as 15 years, with a typical life of three to four years.

Alfalfa also is one of the most nutritious forages, with a high energy density. Hall explains that those demands make predicting annual yields important for livestock and dairyproducers — often the difference between profitability and debt.

"If alfalfa yields are bad, it really can affect a farmer's profitability, because when they make their own hay it's a pretty cheap feed source," he said.If they're expecting three tons to the acre and they only get two, they can suddenly be 50 tons short of forage, and that has to come from somewhere. But the amount that they're getting in milk revenues isn't changing, so it's more of a cost squeeze on the farmer.

"With a cost squeeze, farmers aren't spending as much money in their local hardware stores and jewelry stores and it affects the whole agricultural community. The consumer wouldn't see it in the prices. But if they owned a business in the community, they'd know it immediately when farmers are having a hard time."

Lamb, Mutton Production Down 18 Percent, March Record Low

WASHINGTON, D.C. — ed 8.15 million head, 2 percent a year ago. ommercial red meat production above March 2002. The average January Commercial red meat production for the U.S. totaled 3.70 billion pounds in March, up 1 percent from the 3.68 billion pounds produced in March 2002, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

March 2002 contained 21 weekdays and five Saturdays. March 2003 contained 21 weekdays and five Saturdays.

Beef production, at 2.05 billion pounds, was 1 percent below the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.77 million head, up 1 percent from March 2002. The average live weight was 1,234 pounds, down 7 pounds from March a year ago.

Veal production totaled 16.5 million pounds, 10 percent above March a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 85,100 head, up 10 percent from March 2002. The average live weight was 323 pounds, down 1 pounds from March a year ago.

Pork production totaled 1.62 billion pounds, up 2 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totallive weight was 268 pounds, up 1 pounds from March a year ago.

Lamb and mutton production, at 18.2 million pounds, was down 18 percent from March 2002. Sheep slaughter totaled 264,000 head, 19 percent below last year. The average live weight was 138 pounds, unchanged from March

January-March red meat production was 11.27 billion pounds, virtually unchanged from 2002. Accumulated beef production was down 1 percent from last year, veal was up 8 percent, pork was up 2 percent, and lamb and mutton production was down 15 percent.

Cattlemen Unite In D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Hundreds of farmers and ranchers from across the country walked the halls of the Capitol today, meeting with key congressional offices on top priority issues. Most critical is the urgent need for permanent repeal of the

The livestock producers are active members of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA).

"We represent generations of rural families across the United States who are struggling to maintain their family ranches built by our forefathers," said Idaho cattle producer and NCBA President Eric Davis.

"The excessive burden of the death tax hits us with a devastat-

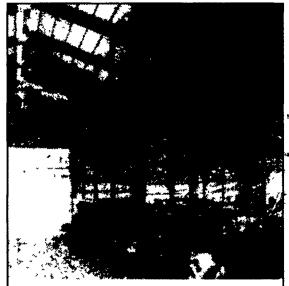
ing blow of up to 55 percent in taxes on the entire operation when a family member dies. İt is an unfair tax on American values and the American dream."

In an assetrich and cashpoor business, the appraised value of rural land is extremely inflated from the agricultural value over the years. Many cattle producers are forced to sell off land, parts of

the entire ranch to pay off tax liabilities. This takes more open spaces out of agriculture production and puts it into the hands of urban developers.

"We must fight for permanent repeal of this antiquated tax. It's not a tax on the wealthy elite it's a death warrant for small-tomedium sized family businesses," said Jay Truitt, NCBA's executive director of legislative affairs.

"The rich can afford accountants and estate planners to help them evade the tax. They're cashrich and amass fortunes, place the money within foundations, and are able to easily survive this tax burden."



AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS

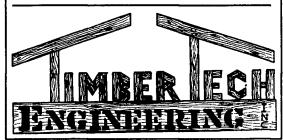
"CALL US TO DESIGN YOUR NEXT BUILDING PROJECT"

FARMSTEAD PLANNING BUILDING DESIGN BLUEPRINT DRAFTING VENTILATION DESIGN

DAIRY FACILITIES DESIGN

Timber Tech Engineering, Inc. 22 Denver Rd., Suite B-2 Denver, PA 17517 PH: (717) 335-2750 FAX: (717) 335-2753

visit our web site: www.timbertecheng.com or E-mail us - trr@timbertecheng.com



Maryland Conservation Tour May 1

Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Maryland Old Line Chapter **ANNOUNCES** 2003 SPRING TOUR -"Nutrient Management on diverse landscapes in Western Maryland" Education Building • Cumberland Md • 9 00 - 3 30 • Cost \$20 00 9 00 Registration (see note below) All participants will meet at the Allegariy College 9 15 9 30 Acid Mine Drainage Floc to control | P" losses in runof Devinder Bhumbla | WV Cooperative Extension 10 30 Acid Mine Drainage Remediation Systems Joe Mills MDE 10 45 11 15 Biosolids application/pe Martha Hynson MDE 11 45 12 30 1 00 2 00 3 30 J 45 *Folks traveling from the Frederick stee or from points East, a chester but will be leaving the Frederic SCD office parting lot at 7 00 am leaving to meet at the Allegany College "The days activities if you re a cartified hild consultant in Maryland, will count towards your certification requ Please mail Reservation Forms to David Kann MDA 604 Solarex Ct Ste 105 Frederick MD 21703 Check payable to SWCS MD Old Line Chapter For more Information Call 301 694 9290 x109 REGISTRATION FORM Soil & Water Conservation Society Maryland Old Line Chapter 2003 Spring Tour "Nutrient Management on Diverse Landscapes in Western Maryland" May 1 2003 No of People Attending ____@ \$20 00 each

NM cert# (if applicable)

Amt enclosed \$



Robert Fulton Fire Co

Hay, Straw & **Grain Auction** Every Thursday 10 am Located on the corner of RT 272 & 222 at Wakefield, PA 717-548-2492 717-548-2371

Randall Ranck Auctioneer 003117-L Consignments Wanted



Fee Reduced For Farmers Attending Half Day

CUMBERLAND, Md. — The Maryland Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society is conducting a tour May 1 in Cumberland, Md.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture's Nutrient Management Program has approved this course for nutrient management credits.

For farmers wanting to know more about rotational grazing and who wish only to attend the afternoon session, the cost is reduced to \$10.

Please see the attached announcement for more details.



The biggest selling

- Non slip surface
- Cleaner Cows lower somatic cell count & less mastitis
- In use 18 years
- 10 year warranty in free stalls, 5 year warranty in tie stalls
- Very reasonably priced

Daniel's Farm Store

324 Glenbrook Rd., Leola, PA 717-656-6982

– Also Available From –

Country Garden Farm Supply Mifflinburg, PA (570) 966-3944

Peachev Harness

1-888-PEACHEY

E. Risser Mfg. 2794 Brumbaugh Rd New Enterprise, PA 16664 (814) 766-2246

Hostetter Surge Annville, PA (717) 867-2896

& Farm Supply Weaver's Farm Store Fleetwood, PA (610) 944-0593