

Farm Hires New Manager

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corn borer, the refuge requirement — or land planted in non-Bt corn — has been standardized at 20 percent. That is still being worked out for the anti-rootworm corn, Antos said.

The Landisville research farm is one of the most important Pennsylvania sites for applied research on agronomic and some horticultural crops.

Research at the center involves the departments of agronomy, entomology, horticulture, and plant pathology plus the USDA and some county extension personnel. In addition to providing specific conditions for research, the facility increases opportunities for growers, consumers, and students to observe experiments and to consult with scientists.

The research involves cultivar testing of corn, soybean, small

grain, forages, annual and perennial flowers, flowering crabapples, strawberries, tomatoes, pumpkin, and other horticultural crops. Other research involves pest control, cover crops, inoculants, fertility and various management studies.

Last fall, the farm grew in size from 106 acres to more than 150 acres with the acquisition of some neighboring farmland.

The research farm offers a Weed Day each July for farmers and consultants. This year's event will add a new feature by

having commercial company representatives on hand, according to Johnson.

Yocum Recalls Changes

Yocum spoke about some of the changes that occurred in the four decades he worked at the research center.

"Probably the biggest change was that we went from zero ornamentals to a pretty big ornamental program," Yocum said of the ad-

dition of annual and perennial flowers to the list of plants grown for research purposes at the station.

Yocum said that agronomic crops — including corn, soybeans, and forages — were planted and harvested by hand during his early years on the research farm. Now, that's all done by machinery.

Another big change: tobacco, a major crop in earlier years, has disappeared from the research plots just as it has from many local farms.

Spring Field Walk

Johnson and Yocum joined a recent field walk for crop consultants and extension agents on the farm.

Del Voight, crop agent from Lebanon County, and other extension personnel, led about 15 participants on a May 1 tour of the research farm, including a stop at the center's solar-powered weather station, small grain plots, alfalfa stands, and a plot of timothy with heavy infestation of cereal rust mites.

Voight pointed out the rolled-up, wild garlic-like appearance of timothy leaves infested with the costly mites that are barely visible to the naked eye.

While he believes "in general, the population is lower" this spring compared to last year, Voight and other agents are reporting sizable infestations in some areas.

"I've seen leaves where they're lined up like soldiers in the grooves," Voight said.

According to Voight, the mites can drift in the air at altitudes of 10,000 feet, navigating by means of tails held upright to catch the wind. They only settle in fields of timothy and perhaps a narrow number of other grass varieties such as tall fescue.

As far as treating at the recommended threshold, when 25 percent of the leaves are curled, Voight advised "hedging on the early side."

The group heard preliminary reports on the possibility of weevil infestations in alfalfa this sea-

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Del Voight shows a mite-infested blade of timothy to crop consultants May 1 at the Landisville Research Farm.

Photos by Dave Lefever



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