

PDMP Honors Student Interns With Cash Awards

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania (PDMP) has wrapped up a successful 2003 Student Internship Program with the presentation of cash awards to two Penn State students who distinguished themselves in the 12-week project.

Marcela Martinez of Reading, and Joel Krall of Lebanon, each received \$1,000 in recognition of their accomplishments as PDMP interns.

Martinez served her internship at Wanner's Pride and Joy Farm in Narvon. Krall was an intern at Frey Dairy in Conestoga.

Each year, PDMP, in partnership with Penn State's Department of Dairy and Animal Sciences and other interested colleges and universities, offers students an opportunity to serve an internship at a PDMP member farm.

"The PDMP internship program provides students a rewarding experience that stresses hands-on learning on some of Pennsylvania's most progressive dairy facilities," explained Tom Craig, chairperson of PDMP's Education Committee.

"Although we were able to award educational grants to just two individuals, the Education

Committee congratulates all of the 2003 interns on an outstanding job."

Other interns included Kristofer Bower of Middlebury Center, and Renee Lampman of Linesville, who interned at Evergreen Farms in Pennsylvania Furnace; Rosalie Zaginayo of Berwick, who worked at Guided Path Farms in Bellefonte; and Sarah Mc Isaac of Levittown, who served her internship with Murmac Farms in Bellefonte.

The purpose of the internship program is to offer students positive experiences related to the management and operation of a dairy. "We hope that through these experiences, students gain an interest in the many career opportunities available on progressive dairies," said Craig.

The student interns benefit in many ways, explained Craig. They enjoy an off-campus learning encounter relevant to their educational goals as they acquire practical knowledge and skills, gain exposure to day-to-day management and decision-making processes, as well as the chance to network with some of Pennsylvania's leading producers and agri-business professionals.

"Having a different background and coming from a different country allowed me to fully

experience this internship," explained Marcela Martinez, a native of Colombia, South America, who interned as a calf manager. "This opportunity opened my mind to the American way of dairy management and let me connect my class knowledge with the fieldwork."

"I learned how to have a good employer-employee relationship, and met people from the industry, Extension programs, and other farms. More importantly, I proved to myself that I really want to work in the dairy industry when I finish my education," she added.

Intern Joel Krall hopes to one day own and operate a 500-600 cow dairy in Lebanon County. His internship allowed him a first-hand look at his future. "I gained knowledge in all areas of cow management, and was able to explore both the employee's and manager's viewpoint, and the roles each have in the dairy's day-to-day operations." Krall also enjoyed working, living, and communicating with the farm's Hispanic workforce, which helped him learn some Spanish and build friendships in the process.

Craig notes that PDMP is gearing up for its 2004 internship program.

Smith Takes The Wheel



STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — Sullivan County Extension Director Richard Smith, right, was named 2004 President of the Pennsylvania Association of County Agricultural Agents at the recent annual meeting in State College. Here, Smith accepts the "President's Steering Wheel" from Earle Robbins, former president. The association represents more than 100 extension educators from 67 Pennsylvania counties as part of Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Turf Problems? You Need This Book!

ITHACA, N.Y. — Insects, diseases, weeds, and other problems can wreak havoc on a lush, healthy stand of turfgrass. Identifying the cause of a turfgrass problem can be an exercise in frustration for homeowners, golf course superintendents, and park and sports field managers who take great pride in their lawns, greens, parks, and fields.

A new pocket guide, "Turfgrass Problems: Picture Clues and Management Options," (\$24.95 plus S&H/sales tax; 214 pages; June 2001), can help turf managers and lawn care aficionados identify problems and implement appropriate management strategies to achieve and maintain healthy plants.

The book contains more than 130 color photos of problems that affect cool-season turfgrasses (including creeping and colonial bentgrasses, Kentucky and annual bluegrasses, fine-leaf and tall fescues, and perennial ryegrasses). The compact, spiral-

bound guide will be an invaluable reference for anyone with a serious interest in turfgrass health — including homeowners, IPM specialists, lawn care professionals, golf course superintendents, agronomists, park managers, extension educators, and students.

The guide covers four types of problems: abiotic problems, diseases, insects, and weeds. (Abiotic problems are caused by "nonliving" factors, such as weather, poor soil structure, or improper nutrient levels.)

The book NRAES-125, is available for \$24.95 per copy, plus shipping and handling, from NRAES, Cooperative Extension, 152 Riley-Robb Hall, Ithaca, New York 14853-5701. Shipping and handling for one copy is \$5.50 within the continental U.S. New York residents, add 8 percent sales tax (calculated on both the cost of the guide and shipping and handling charges).

PLNA Unveils Survey Results

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association (PLNA) has recently unveiled a new survey tool to help gauge the pulse of green industry professionals in Pennsylvania.

The first survey was conducted in February seeking information on the following questions: segment of the industry represented, level of government that creates the most problems for your business, and issues that affect your business the most.

Overall results from the survey showed that the PLNA membership is divided on what level of government affects them the most. State Government proved to be most intrusive with 39 percent, but 29 percent and 28 percent thought that local and federal government affected their business the most.

When it came to the issues facing the industry, one response was a clear favorite among the respondents: 80 percent believe finding and retaining skilled labor was the biggest issue facing their businesses. The second most pressing issue facing the industry wasn't as clear, with four responses ranked very closely. They included 45 percent, competing against the underground industry; 44 percent, complying/understanding latest government regulations; 34.5 percent, obtaining/affording technological advances and equipment; and 30 percent, restrictions from local government.

Based on the February results, the next survey will further explore the labor issue, the need for H2A reform, and what labor services PLNA can provide for its members.

Rare Pest Defoliates Maryland's Holly Trees

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Residents of Southern Maryland wanting to "deck the halls with boughs of holly" this year are being robbed of the chance by a grinch in the form of an uncommon small green insect.

Unusually large numbers of inch-long green inch worms, called holly loopers (*Thasanopyga intractata*), are stripping many of the popular trees of all their leaves.

The normally evergreen American holly is green no more in the yards and woods of many areas of southern Maryland, Caroline County on the Eastern Shore and the Middle River area of Baltimore County. In hard-hit areas like the picturesque Accokeek and Piscataway areas of Prince George's and Charles counties,

the holly loopers have trimmed most of the hollies of all or most of their leaves, though some remain untouched, which is characteristic of this species.

"Despite the appearance of serious tree damage, the hollies should grow new leaves in the spring, and begin to recover," said Robert H. Tichenor Jr., Maryland Department of Ag (MDA)'s chief of forest pest management. "Landowners should simply have patience and wait for completely stripped hollies to look normal again with the usual three-four years of leaves on their branches."

Little is known about the holly looper. The first documented report of a holly looper outbreak in the southern U.S. was in 1972 and there is no official record of

it being a pest in Maryland. The small green inchworm is more commonly found in areas with mild winters such as the Gulf states and coastal southeastern U.S. Because it is not believed that the holly looper can survive a "normal" Maryland winter, it is thought that it probably gets to Maryland through the northern migration of adults. The outbreak is highly unusual and is not expected to continue. Landowners are urged not to cut or spray the defoliated trees as they are expected to recover.

To learn more about caring for holly trees, contact the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service's Home and Garden Information Center at www.hgic.umd.edu or call the Master Gardener toll-free at (800) 342-2507.

Small Street Co-Op: Door-To-Door Support For Local Farms

Karen Baase
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Madison County

Locally produced is not just a concept to Jim McDowell. It's the very foundation of his new business, The Small Street Co-op. When he isn't producing records or arranging music with his wife Dianne, Jim is taking to the roads of central New York to assemble a variety of naturally grown and organically produced foods.

Once assembled, he delivers them door-to-door to his customers. The Small Street Co-op, in its second year, provides this service every week during the spring, summer, and fall.

Jim and Dianne have supported alternative agriculture and the farmers who practice it for more than 25 years. They are among a growing number of consumers who want to know how and

where their food is produced. Along with these questions, they have often wondered about the quality of the foods that are produced in massive quantities, and then reassembled, processed, and distributed by the large companies that dominate the food system in the U.S.

By listing only locally produced, organic products in the co-op's quarterly catalogue, Small Street insures accountability, helping customers to know how and where each product is grown or raised. And by supporting smaller family farms, the co-op encourages good stewardship of the land and rewards the use of environmentally friendly practices.

While it might appear at first glance as if Jim has set himself up as the notorious middleman, nothing could be further from the truth. In most cases, catalogue

prices are wholesale and Jim collects only a nominal delivery charge, 10 percent of purchase with \$3 minimum. This keeps products affordable and allows the small farmer a decent return. And with the added convenience of home delivery, customers are finding direct buying not only easier but hard to resist!

The money that is exchanged stays local. That in itself is empowering for everyone concerned. But what is even more empowering is that Small Street Co-op customers know they are supporting local farms directly, while participating farmers and suppliers continue to watch their sales volume grow. For Jim, there's great satisfaction not only in watching Small Street Co-op grow, but in knowing that others are looking to his business as a model for other communities. It's a win-win situation for everyone concerned.