

MilloGram Wenger's Feed Mill, Inc.



Massey, Mount Joy, Muncy, Rheems, Shippensburg & Spring Glen

Vol. 15, No. 6, October - November 2002

Our Common Goals

As we reflect back on calendar year 2002, it will be remembered as one of the most challenging years in history for the agricultural industry. It was the first time that I can remember (and that is a long time) that all protein markets—broilers, eggs, hogs, turkeys, beef, and even dairy—were below cost of production.

Yes, times are tough, but “tough times don’t last, but tough people do.” At times like these, we must make sacrifices in order to build a stronger future. These sacrifices come in all different sizes and forms but

must be committed from the heart if they are to make a difference. With the “right” people on board, our sacrifices will make a difference.

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our common goals. Our company will continue to evolve and change based on input and ideas generated by the “right” people.

I will end this column not knowing what life will bring in the months and years ahead, but I do know that every act, every word, and every deed must strengthen daily life and society as a whole and will reaffirm our Christian values and fundamental decencies.

May you find the holiday season filled with the true meaning of Christmas!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Boony Shaw'.

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Patience, Opportunity stressed at Annual Meetings

Patience and opportunity were among the themes stressed at Wenger's Annual Report meetings held in November. While the dismal egg market has been a dominant topic of conversation, CEO Barry Shaw spoke of the market in historical terms and stressed Wenger's resilience and strong core values. Barry noted, "I've never seen a situation like this before. All the markets—even dairy—are down. However, the potential of this company is unlimited. With everyone working together, we can find new opportunities and turn this situation around."

Barry stressed that it would take time to recover from losses on the egg market, but the company was committed to the industry and was looking for new and innovative ways to market

eggs that do not rely directly on volatile open markets.

Internal growth and development are also priorities for Wenger's. In FY2002, Wenger's introduced the New Beginning program, a program designed to facilitate inter-company communication and create a blueprint for the company's future. Barry noted that while New Beginning would help outline company goals, Wenger's was also working on a way to measure progress on those goals.

Finally, Barry stressed the history of the company and its strong core values that founder Mel Wenger bequeathed, "The title of this year's report is 'Preserve & Progress,' we need to move forward as a company while preserving the strong core values that Mel left us."

This year's annual report was produced in-house and included historic photos of Wenger's mills.



Wenger's wins Environmental, Mentor Awards

Efforts by Wenger's Feed Mill, Inc. to protect waterways through development of better poultry and swine feeds earned the company an award for Outstanding Achievement for a Medium-Sized Business from Businesses for the Bay. In addition, Wenger's environmental coordinator, Bill Achor, was named "Mentor of the Year."

Wenger's is being honored for pioneering the use of phytase in its feeds. Adding phytase to poultry and swine feed reduces the amount of phosphorus in manure. Phosphorous is an essential nutrient but can become a pollutant if excess amounts build up in the soil and groundwater.

"This technology is part of our long-term commitment to the community we serve and our overall corporate commitment to environmental stewardship," said Barry Shaw, president and CEO.

Wenger's has sought to improve nutrient management through its own feed, through customer outreach and education, and through investment in emerging tech-

nologies to process manure and minimize water and energy use.

Environmental Coordinator Bill Achor, who was named "Mentor of the Year," is a large part of Wenger's educational and outreach efforts.

Bill Achor serves as a volunteer mentor for nutrient management for Businesses for the Bay and was honored for his enthusiastic support of the program. Through his membership in the South Central Pennsylvania P2 Regional Steering Committee, Bill has shared his expertise and has also encouraged other businesses such as Country View Family Farms and Orgo Systems, Inc. to join.

"Business for the Bay" is a voluntary team of forward-looking industries, commercial establishments, local governments and small businesses within the Chesapeake Bay watershed who are committed to implementing pollution prevention initiatives in their daily operations.

Nutrient Management Series

Ground Application

The Nutrient Management Advisory Board continues to labor through the many proposed changes to the Act 6 Nutrient Management Act. The year began with a conceptual list of what the changes might look like, but, to date, the Board has only managed to debate eight of the twenty proposed changes to the regulations. It is a painful process as most in attendance realize that many of the proposed changes are a result of isolated situations that have occurred across the state and have received a lot of attention from the environmental community. Nonetheless, these issues have made the “top twenty,” and so the discussions continue. The next meeting is scheduled for December.

In this article I would like to discuss another one of the proposed changes as it relates to bare ground manure application. Closely related to the Phosphorus issue that I discussed in the last article, this change could require a dramatic shift in how we move manure nutrients out to the fields when our cropping days are done.

This change is tracking very closely to NRCS 590 Standard, which states in detail the requirements of bare ground or fall/winter manure application. Up until this point, the State Conservation Commission has relied on DEP’s Manure Management Manual and Field Application supplement to provide recommendations for applying manure.

The proposed change would limit fall/winter application of manure unless permanent vegetation exists, a cover crop is established, or a minimum of 25% residue is present at time of spreading.

The proposed change would limit fall/winter application of manure unless permanent vegetation exists, a cover crop is established, or a minimum of 25% residue is present at time of spreading. This could affect both liquid and dry manure applications as many farmers are looking at fall as a critical time to spread manure to allow for adequate storage capacity throughout the winter. There is still potential for application only if the P-index was calculated on a field, both “A” and “B” sections, and manure

application is allowed as a result of the analysis. This will bring up more than a few concerns.

The genuine concern in fall/winter application which generated this change was the idea that 20% to 40% of manure that is applied in the fall is typically not done on an existing crop that can capture and utilize the nutrients. This exposes these nutrients to fall and winter weather that can contribute to surface and groundwater

leaching, leaving less than 50% of the N and most of the P for the following spring’s small grains and grass hay

and less than 20% of N and most of the P for the following summer’s corn crop. So in essence we are applying excess P with little N benefit.

Fall application had also been used in some instances as a disposal method for N, which allowed for more application on less acres due to the N losses previously mentioned. Application methods may also be challenged as the conflict between surface application and incorporation may need to be resolved. Soil scientists

Scholarships Awarded to PSU Students

Wenger’s awarded six scholarships to students enrolled in Penn State University’s Agriculture Sciences program.

Winners this year included: Jennifer L. Mapes, a sophomore majoring in Animal Science; Nicholas P. Urbanek, a junior majoring in Animal Science; Regina N. Lehman, a freshman majoring in Animal Science; Anna K. Soergel, a sophomore majoring in Animal Science; Todd B. Eisenhower, a senior majoring in Agriculture Business Management; and Luke J. Zerby, a junior majoring in Animal Science.

This marks the third year Wenger’s has awarded scholarships to Penn State students. As CAO Jamie Rowley explained, “The PSU scholarships help us to promote agriculture and the study of poultry science by giving deserving students the financial resources to pursue their goal.”

Congratulations to this year’s recipients!

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3 and agronomists are not in agreement either as surface runoff potential needs to be compared to the potential for ground water leaching. There is even some “frost till” technology being researched in our northeastern states that may prove that incorporating manures into cold or frozen soils may be an acceptable best management practice. Equipment is currently available to apply liquid manures in growing crops or moderate to heavy residues with little to no soil surface disturbance. However, dry manure application equipment has not seen the same intensive progress.

If incorporation is not included in our options for bare ground application due to a P-index determination, and if surface application does meet the above proposed restrictions, producers may be forced to store or stockpile dry manure from late October to mid April. Can it be properly stored or stockpiled until optimal application is available? Only time will prove this effective.

If we want more of our crop acreage available for fall/winter application, there will need to be a dramatic increase in the uses of cover crops and “green” manures that are tilled under prior to

spring planting. In areas that cover cropping is difficult to establish prior to fall’s drop in temperatures, other best management practices will need to be implemented.

If incorporation is necessary to conserve nutrients, how can it be done in such a way as to conserve the residue cover that reduces the potential for soil erosion? We do not want to regulate application of nutrients and forget our fundamental elements of soil conservation. Nutrient management and soil conservation must be integrated to produce the most effective means of environmental protection.

No one wakes up in the morning with the thought of polluting a creek or a river. It often happens because we do not plan for it not to happen. As we increase our knowledge of how to prevent pollution from our farming practices from entering the Bay, we need to apply that knowledge where appropriate. We may need to modify some of our traditional farming practices to accomplish continual environmental improvement and in doing so handing down a legacy to the next generation by leaving it better than we found it.

Wenger Customer, Employee Picnics Held

Wenger’s Annual Customer and Employee Picnics were held at Lloyd H. Fuhrman Memorial Park in Maytown, PA on Saturday, September 26 and Sunday, September 27 respectively. Despite days of bad weather, the skies cleared for both picnics.

This year’s entertainment was provided by Amy Zellers, feed formulation, and the Hoofs and Horns 4H club, who provided pony rides on both days. The ponies proved to be popular with both adults and children.

The food was provided by Hess Catering and included the usual Wenger fare of chicken, a pork roast, and red beet eggs.

While last year’s picnics attracted 950 people, this year’s event drew nearly 1,000.

Thanks to those who volunteered their time at the picnics, and special thanks to Kelly Wood for organizing both picnics and assuring they were an incredible success.

Wenger News

- Congratulations to Stephanie Warner, human resources, and Greg Delp. Stephanie and Greg were married on November 2, 2002.

- Cheryl and Ira Reed, complex manager, welcomed their daughter Larissa Gabriel, who was born on October 27.

- Janelle and Doug Metzler, complex coordinator, welcomed their daughter Jaden Lynn, who was born on October 10.

- Congratulations to Jill M. Pierce, daughter of Mary and Ken Pierce, layer service. Jill was awarded a scholarship through PennAg Industries Association.

- Congratulations to Eric D. Stone, son of Trudy and Doug Stone, contract coordinator. Eric was awarded a scholarship through PennAg Industries Association.

Note: Feed Bins

Please try to keep the area around your feed bins clear. Items left near the bins create hazards for our drivers at night and during inclement weather. Thanks for your help!



Jeff Rowe

Jeff Rowe started with Wenger's in November of 1989 as a second shift mill operator in Mount Joy. He quickly moved to third shift where his ability to fix things was much appreciated. At the time, there was no maintenance person available on that shift.

Jeff now works in maintenance on third shift. While he mainly works in Mount Joy and Rheems, he also takes the occasional trip to Spring Glen, Shippensburg, and Massey to maintain and fix equipment at those locations.

While Jeff enjoys fixing things, he also cited his coworkers as one of the reasons he has stayed at Wenger's. "On third shift, we have a really good team of people," he noted.

Jeff grew up in Middletown and now lives in Royalton near Middletown. In his spare time, he enjoys riding his dirt bike and likes to frequent the off road trails near Tower City, PA.



Ed Wentling

After hauling eggs and then feed for Dutch Country, Ed Wentling came to Wenger's to work in transportation. Ed is a first shift Rheems/Mount Joy driver, but he'll be the last to complain if asked to haul feed from Spring Glen or Shippensburg. The variety of the job is what Ed likes best.

Ed turned 65 on November 9 but didn't choose to retire. "I like to drive, and I like the people I work with," he explained.

Born and raised in Lebanon, Ed was a survival technician in the Navy for 20 years. Ed was responsible for the survival gear on airplanes, and his well-packed parachutes helped to save the lives of three pilots during the Vietnam War.

In his spare time, Ed enjoys photography and working in his vegetable garden. He lives in Lebanon with his son Joey and his wife Joanne (pictured above left), who also works for Wenger's.

Mel's Corner: Bagged Feed & Liquid Molasses

Wenger's 2002 Annual Report contained historic photos of company mills and complexes including a photo of Wenger employee Amos Longenecker adding molasses to a bag of feed.

Liquid blackstrap molasses, the final product of the sugar refining process, was added to horse and cattle feeds primarily for flavor. With its sticky texture, the ingredient could not be added to the mixer, so it was slowly added to the feed as it emerged from the mixture and was bagged.

The molasses tank was located in the basement of the Rheems Mill. It shared

distribution lines with the fat tank, and a certain nameless Wenger employee once accidentally left it on overnight leaving a sticky layer of molasses on the floor.

Liquid molasses was eliminated when Wenger's discontinued bagged feeds and began concentrating on poultry feeds in the 1970s.

A dried molasses product is now available as a feed ingredient, but Wenger's seldom uses it. Liquid molasses is still heavily used in dairy feeds.

Wenger employee Amos Longenecker adds molasses to a bag of feed. Wenger's no longer uses liquid molasses as a feed ingredient.





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MilloGram

Vol. 15, No. 6
 October - November 2002

The MilloGram is published six times a year for our customers, employees, and friends.

Wenger's Feed Mill, Inc.
 P.O. Box 26
 101 W. Harrisburg Ave.
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Feed Ordering Fax Number
 1-800-242-5135 or 717-367-7298

Content & design by Cher Rineer
 To be added or removed from the mailing list, please contact
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 or e-mail your request:
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Wenger's holds 2003 Kickoff Meeting

Wenger's held its 2003 Kickoff Meeting on October 29 at Acorn Farms in Mount Joy. The annual kickoff is an opportunity to reward performance in the previous fiscal year and outline company goals for the new fiscal year.

This year's speakers included representatives from Centurion Poultry, Inc. including Gijs Schimmel, president, and Jim Cook, sales manager. Chad Gregory, United Egg Producers member service, was also a featured speaker and spoke about trends in the egg industry.

Awards were given for outstanding performance in FY2002. Service Technician, Earl Geib, took home two awards this year for lowest feed cost per dozen and for earliest age to 48 lb. case weight. Pullet Service Technician Ray Ginder won the award for earliest age to 50% production. Complex Manager Ira Reed won the award for lowest feed cost per dozen for a complex.

Congratulations to this year's award winners!

New Customers

Broilers

Josh Bair
 Barry Neff

Layers

V. Wheelock
 Cloverleaf/Providence
 R. Charles Groff

Swine

Henry Brothers
 Darrell Henry
 Noah Swarey
 Frieling & Sons

Ducks

Ken Zimmerman