



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

Beyond the Blue

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Glycerin from Biodiesel Processing Fed to Deer

JESSICA HARPSTER
AND
PAUL HEASLEY
Little Lions FFA

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Members of the State College Little Lions FFA Chapter are feeding “glycerin-treated feed” to the whitetail deer at Penn State’s College of Agricultural Science’s deer research facility.

This pilot project is investigating the palatability of glycerin and its utilization as an energy feed source alternative in whitetail deer rations. Feed pellets for this study have been top-dressed with glycerin, at a rate of 5 percent volume by weight. Students distill the glycerol, a byproduct from our biodiesel production, to separate the methanol from the glycerin. Our initial goals were to recover un-reacted methanol, reusing it for biodiesel production, as well as reduce the negative environmental and economic impacts of glycerol. The students used the glycerin to make soap.

This use of the glycerol byproducts was consistent with the recycling goals of our “Used French Fry Oil to Biodiesel Project.” We looked for alternative uses for glycerin that may contribute to further energy utilization in our food system. With the help of our partners on the Biodiesel Team, we have initiated this study and expanded our biodiesel project goals and activities to include feed uses of glycerin.

Our growing interest in using the

glycerin byproduct from biodiesel processing for deer nutrition includes the following: whitetail deer need higher energy levels before the rut and during the late winter for body maintenance; energy is also required for growth, reproduction, and antler growth; and glycerin energy values are similar to corn grain on a dry matter basis.

Members have been working with Dr. Gabriella Varga, Penn State distinguished professor of animal science, and Mr. Donald Wagner, deer unit manager, in all phases of this project. Also aiding in our project is Aaron Kosak of Westway Feed by providing the testing for our glycerin.

Members have presented our project during Ag Progress Days and recently have been videotaped by the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development that highlights this project for an “Alternative Assessment and 21st Century Skills” video production. The video will be available in January 2010.

A video is being produced to highlight the first feeding and start of the project. A game camera is being purchased and will be installed to help members keep a photo journal of the project’s progress. These photos will be posted on the State College High School FFA Web site in the near future. For more information, contact us, the advisers, at plh11@scasd.org or jlh48@scasd.org.

Tractors Plow the Way for Cancer Research

TYLER LALLI

Blue Juniata FFA Member

ALEXANDRIA, Pa. — Juniata Valley students would have taken you for a ride on their big green, red, yellow, or blue tractors on Friday, Nov. 6. More than 20 tractors, skid steers, backhoes, and lawn tractors attended the event. Agricultural Science instructor and FFA advisor Raylene Russell commented, “To organize the event was not hard. The tractor day committee took care of what was to be done. The students who participated already knew what to do because of our previous event.”

There was a \$5 fee for a student to drive his or her tractor to school. The proceeds benefited bone cancer patient and fellow Blue Juniata FFA member, Clay Allison. Clay himself drove his tractor to school. “It was really nice to see that Clay participated in the event with the other students,” stated Russell. The students joined together to earn more than \$250. “It’s really nice that the school allows us to do something like this and also that it helps one of our own students,” Blue Juniata FFA Chapter’s president Ben LeCrone added.

Students who participated needed to dress warm and make an early start. The slow speed of the tractors made for a long drive. “It took me over 35 minutes from my house to get to the school,” exclaimed junior



Photo by Raylene Russell

Blue Juniata FFA members stand together for a united cause and a quick picture after a long, cold drive.

Krista Hawn. The weather was not on the students’ side that morning as it was very chilly. Sophomore Tyler LeCrone remarked, “It seemed like it took a lot longer than it did because it was freezing.”

Juniata Valley Principal Dave Christopher said, “It went very well and I thought that it was very well organized. The students looked like they had a lot of fun.” Christopher was pleased that an anonymous donor plans to match the amount of money raised for Clay and send it to a critically injured FFA member from Booker, Texas. Christopher attended the High School of the student who

fell. The student fell three stories in a mall while he was attending the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis. The student is still in the hospital in Indianapolis and continues to undergo surgery in the hopes that he will be moved to a rehab facility closer to his Texas home.

Juniata Valley is considering having another tractor day in the spring of 2010. “Although I am a senior, I really hope that JV will continue to have tractor day in future years to help other families,” said Bryant Schilling.

To Indy and Back

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION

MERCERSBURG, Pa. — Wow! Time sure does fly. It’s hard to believe that it is already November. Where have the past four months gone?

First I would like to congratulate all the Career Development Event (CDE) competitors who had the opportunity to compete at the 82nd National FFA Convention in Indianapolis. You all did an amazing job and should be proud of your accomplishments.

At the convention, the state officer Team had the opportunity to serve as delegates. To see what issues were debated check out ffa.org. We also had the honor of working on a community service project for an entire day. The little free time we did have was spent socializing with other State Officers from different states and enjoying the career show and FFA Super Mall.

November is a very special month that I look forward too each year. Not only is it the month of



TYLER FUNK

Thanksgiving but, it is also the month of one of my favorite activities, hunting. More importantly, November is a busy month for chapter visits and planning for Mid-Winter Convention,

ACES, and SLLC. I have had the opportunity to visit many different chapters this fall and let me tell you that each one amazes me. Every one is a little bit different in its own way. It seemed that each department has a different area or areas that they focus on. It is great to see that agriculture in Pennsylvania is so diverse.

Remember, if you’d like to see your chapter in the Blue and Gold Page, please submit articles to Mike Brammer at c-mbrammer@STATE.PA.US. Guidelines can be found at www.paffa.state.pa.us. I look forward to seeing all of you soon at the upcoming conferences and the Pennsylvania Farm Show. Until then Happy Holidays!

Editor’s note: Tyler Funk, is Pa. State Vice President

Service Learning Is Part of the FFA Experience



Left, Kyle Bitting, student, Mary Welte, parent and volunteer, and Tyler Schaeffer, student and project manager, work hard to plant native grasses at the park entrance.

TYLER SCHAEFFER

AND

TODD BIDDLE

Cumberland Valley FFA

MECHANICSBURG, Pa. — Many times playgrounds and play equipment do not meet the needs of all children, making it difficult for children with disabilities to play and interact with their peers. Sand, grass and bark surfaces make it nearly impossible for children who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices to navigate the play space.

When playgrounds are accessible children of all abilities have the opportunity to play together and learn from each other.

Individuals from around the Mechanicsburg, Pa. area recognized the need for a handicap accessible playground and decided to take action. The CACC, Capital Area Christian Church, donated two acres for the playground and another 10-15 acres for community development. CACC worked to form partnerships in order to plan, develop, build, and maintain each aspect of the park. One of these

partnerships involved the Cumberland Valley FFA.

The Cumberland Valley FFA Chapter developed the landscape plans for the park. The native vegetation that was selected for the park is hardy and adaptable. Students also selected plants that had little safety threats to those playing in the park. Student designs were reviewed by the Cumberland County Master Gardener program, local landscapers, the CACC church staff, and CV High School administration. These people discussed which design to choose, and decided upon the current design.

This fall the Cumberland Valley FFA continues to support this partnership by working with the CACC to help maintain the aesthetics of the park’s landscape. The FFA chapter advisor, Todd Biddle, applied for a National FFA, “Learning to Serve” grant. The grant funds are provided by CSREES, a division of USDA, and are used to replace any damaged plant material or add new native plant material this upcoming year. The chapter will also landscape additional locations on the park. One hundred percent of the Cumberland Valley FFA members will be actively involved in this extensive project.

While the Cumberland Valley FFA is currently only funded for this year, the FFA plans to apply for the same grant to acquire additional funds to support the funding of this project for the 2010-2011 school year.