News and Announcements

Maryland Wins Northeast Collegiate Soil Judging

T. Milton Nelson

The Univ. of Maryland’s Agronomy Department has another addition to the bulging trophy case at College Park which showcases the achievements of its nationally known collegiate soil judging teams.

For the 11th time in 20 yr, a Maryland team has captured the Northeast regional collegiate soil judging competition.

In addition, a Univ. of Maryland student was the champion individual at this year’s 29th annual contest held October 10 near Newcomb in the Adirondack mountain area of upper New York state.

The Maryland team, along with second-place Penn State, is now eligible to compete in the national collegiate soil judging contest. That event is scheduled Apr. 29, 1988 at Brookings, SD.

Bruce Bagley of Huntingtown (Calvert County), an agronomy senior, placed first in the regional contest. Robert Lindgren of Hillandale (Montgomery County), a senior in natural resources management, was fifth.

Other members of the Maryland team included Kathleen Mulholland of Edgewater (Anne Arundel County), and Jennifer Cassells of Bethesda (Montgomery County), both seniors in natural resources management. Also, two Prince Georges County residents—David Verdone of Adelphi and Wayne Blake-Hedges of Bowie. Both are agronomy seniors.

Colleges represented in this year’s regional contest included Maryland, Penn State, Delaware Valley College, Cornell and the Univ. of Connecticut. Cornell was the host school.

Richard A. Weismiller of Fairland (Montgomery County) is coaching the Maryland soil judging team this year. Dr. Weismiller is an associate professor of agronomy at the Univ. of Maryland and a specialist in soil and water resource management for the university’s cooperative extension service.

Ian Kaufman of Edgewater (Anne Arundel County) is the assistant coach. An agronomy graduate student at the College Park campus, he was a member of last year’s Maryland team which placed second in the regional contest.

Dr. Weismiller reported that the judging pits for this year’s Northeast regional contest were located in a forested area in sandy glacial tills known to soil scientists as Spodosols. Iron and organic matter leach rapidly in these soils.

Maryland teams won the national collegiate soil judging championship in 1972 and 1983. The 1975 team was runnerup in the national contest.

Collegiate soil judging contests are sponsored by the American Society of Agronomy and affiliated campus student clubs. Assistance is provided by the USDA-SCS. For further information contact: Milt Nelson: (301) 454-3622 or Richard A. Weismiller: (301) 454-4787.

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