

Lancaster Farming

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FARM TRENDS

by Dick Wanner

Pa. Milk Output About Unchanged

Milk production in Pennsylvania during January was 555 million pounds, about 1 percent more than in December, but 1 percent less than in January last year, according to the Crop Reporting Service.

The number of milk cows in the Commonwealth during January was 673,000 - the same as last month, but 1 percent below the January year ago number of 678,000.

Milk produced per cow averaged 825 pounds in January, compared with 820 pounds in December and 825 pounds in January last year.

United States milk production during January is estimated at 9,278 million pounds, down 3 percent

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Keystone Expo - Not Dead Yet

Plans for a new facility to replace the old Farm Show complex in Harrisburg ran into a major snag this week as the state Senate shelved a measure to finance the project.

In what was apparently a political power play, Pennsylvania Auditor General Robert Casey prevailed upon the Senate to vote against the Keystone Exposition Center bill. In a prepared statement which he sent to the Senate, Casey said, "I have read with amazement, press

reports that the Keystone Exposition Center...will be self-liquidating." He added that the center would, "...provide benefits to a very limited area and a very limited group."

Casey's statement did not take into account estimates of revenues which would be generated by a new center, revenues which would be used to repay the \$150 million cost. Nor did Casey mention in his statement that a new center has the backing of

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Penn State Dean Predicts . . .

More Funds for Ag Research

"I think we'll soon be getting more funds for extension programs," Dr. James M. Beattie, dean of the Penn State College of Agriculture, told a press conference Tuesday at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center. The question-and-answer session with newsmen preceded the annual Lancaster County Extension Association meeting at which Beattie was the featured speaker.

Beattie said the federal budget last year trimmed expenditures for extension and research work. For fiscal year 1975, which begins July 1, Beattie said a modest increase has been provided. "Vacancies in our program haven't been filled over the past year," Beattie said, "because of the budget problem. Out of about 400 positions now, we have 19 vacancies, and I'm sure it's hurt our program. We'll be able to fill some of those positions, but probably not all of them because costs are going up."

Research is a necessary element of a strong agriculture, Beattie commented, and added that he disagrees with the detractors of agricultural research. "Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times", is a book that came out over a year ago slamming our research programs, saying they were geared only to mechanized

corporation farming. Nothing could be farther from the truth," Beattie said. "The people who wrote that book read a lot of research synopses. They didn't read the research reports themselves, and they drew a lot of wrong conclusions."

According to Beattie, the family farm will remain the dominant force in American agriculture. "There may be some changes in the family farm, but it'll still be with us. I definitely don't see farming being taken over by giant, multi-national firms."

There are some new directions for agricultural research, Beattie noted, some of them influenced by increased awareness of the environmental impact of agriculture. "Agricultural chemicals are important in farming, and some critics have said we emphasized chemicals at the expense of biological controls," Beattie said. "We've always searched for biological controls, and we're doing even more work in that area today. There are researchers looking for disease-resistant plant varieties, as well as



Dr. James M. Beattie, dean of Penn State's College of Agriculture, shown as he faced newsmen in a news conference Tuesday at the Farm and Home Center.

predators and viruses that are also under investigation attack crop pests." at Penn State and other No-till farming methods (Continued On Page 17)

Eshelman Sees No End For Inflation

"We haven't been able to stop inflation for the past ten years, and I don't see how we're going to stop it this year," Congressman Edwin D. Eshelman said at a news conference in Ephrata this week. The conference was televised Wednesday evening on Channel 7, D and E Cable TV's local origination channel. Lancaster Farming and other local news media were represented at the conference.

Eshelman added that he

didn't think wage and price controls were the answer to inflation. "Controls don't work unless you put a lid on everything," he said. "When controls go off in April, I think we'll see some more price increases, but they should stabilize pretty soon. "One thing we should never underestimate is the power of the consumer. When the price of something gets too high, people stop buying it and that brings the price down. If we give our economy a chance to work,

prices will find their natural levels and everybody will be better off."

Gasoline was one of the items Eshelman feels might find its natural price level after controls are lifted. "We might even see gas wars in the not-too-distant future," the Congressman predicted.

On the subject of rationing, Eshelman said, "I don't think we'll have to get into gasoline rationing, not if everybody cooperates. The even-odd system really isn't

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Victor Ziegler Sees . . .

A Bright Future In Dairying

Victor Ziegler's lot-confined herd of 210 stub-tailed milking cows produces well over 4 tons of milk per day on a once-a-day feeding schedule which features a completely combined mix of haylage, insilage, brewers grains, and concentrates. The 41-year old Ziegler, a recipient of the 1953 American Farmer degree, owns and operates a 212-acre dairy farm near Reistville, Lebanon County. While admitting that 1973 was "the poor year out of the last ten", Victor sees a bright future for the dairyman. He states: "Why should I get out now, when it's just getting good?"

Victor started in the dairy business after graduation from high school in 1950. His father, Abraham, offered several paths to him, each with the understanding that nothing comes without responsibilities or monetary obligations. A note was signed whereby half of the elder Ziegler's 30 cows

were transferred to Victor as wages. In 1954, two years after his marriage to the former Grace Cox, Victor proceeded to buy the complete operation from his father, and the 4-year partnership ended. Nine years later, when his sister wanted to buy a farm, he paid his father in full, thereby making money available for the benefit of other members in the family.

Today Ziegler farms not only the old home place but also an adjoining farm which he purchased, and an additional 140 acres of rented ground. His herd was increased to a total of 275 cows, 220 heifers, and several bulls. He says he wants to keep on growing to keep the business more challenging and interesting. Victor describes his operation as being "strictly commercial", and he utilizes only the most efficient

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Victor Ziegler is confident of his future as a dairy farmer. He concedes that 1973 was his worst year, but that things are going to get better and this is no time to get out.