

Dairy

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task force has received over \$10,000, about half of which came from members of PennAg Industries." PennAg is a trade association of agribusiness firms, with headquarters in Ephrata. Kish said the Atlantic Breeders Cooperative, Northeast Breeders and

several pharmaceutical firms have also been big contributors. The task force hopes to get another \$17,000 from industry.

"But we want to get our story out to the dairy farmers, too," Kish said. "There are 600,000 cows in this state, and if the average cow is losing \$70 a year because of health problems, we feel dairymen should be more than willing to help solve those problems. We're asking individual

dairymen to contribute \$10 apiece to the project."

Dr. S. B. Guss, Penn State's well-known extension veterinarian, told the group that Pennsylvania had the potential for developing a dairy breeding herd second to none, but first health problems have to be licked. Guss said the health problems were of three main varieties. Contagious diseases, such as TB, brucellosis, VD, IBR, shipping fever and diarrhea can be handled with vaccines. Pennsylvania was one of the most zealous states in ridding its dairy herds of TB and brucellosis, and the early and consistent adoption of artificial insemination techniques have eliminated most venereal diseases. Contagious diseases, such as TB, brucellosis, VD, IBR, shipping fever and diarrhea can be handled with vaccines. Pennsylvania was one of the most zealous states in ridding its dairy herds of TB and brucellosis, and the early and consistent adoption of artificial insemination techniques have eliminated most venereal diseases.

dairy herd health study would most like to investigate.

"Metabolic problems have increased drastically in the last 25 years," Guss told the group. "These disorders don't all have clear cut characteristics, but they all seem to be related to increased production, the kind of feed we're giving these animals and the kind of soil that feed is grown on. Milk fever, anemia, estrus problems, arthritis in older cattle, fragile bones in younger ones — these all seem to be related to trace element deficiencies, mineral imbalances, deficiencies and even excesses.

"The pressure on producers who have large financial commitments is tremendous. They've got to get everything they can out of their cows, and to do that, they've got to push all the forage they can into their animals. So we have real sharp operators, doing everything they can to maximize production, and running into problems they can't solve."

Penn State's approach to the problem is an interdisciplinary one, Dr. Walter Thomas pointed out. Thomas was representing Dr. James Beattie, dean of Penn State's College of Agriculture. He said any funds raised by the task force would be used not only in studying herds, but in looking at the quality of the feed the animals get and the way that feed is grown.

"It is obvious that many talents are needed," Thomas said. "Thus, our interdisciplinary group on this project includes animal and dairy scientists, agronomists, veterinarians, horticulturists, and personnel from the U. S. Pasture Research Laboratory at University Park."

Dairymen who wish to contribute to the research project can do so by sending a check directly to Dr. Robert Flipse, Room 229, Agricultural Administration Building, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. 16802. Checks should be made out to Penn State, and marked "For Project 1870".

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Infectious diseases, those which can be caused by mismanagement, include foot rot, mastitis, baby calf losses and so forth. Nothing but better management can cure these, Guss said.

Metabolic disorders were the final health problems which Guss discussed, and he said these strike possibly even more often at the most capable operators. And it is these problems that the

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