

Dairy seminar focuses on nutrition, minerals and effects on herd health

CENTREVILLE, Pa. — Feeding standards and disease prevention were the primary topics presented at the dairy seminar held here this week. Sponsored by the Penn State Extension Service, the event is held annually to update interested feed programmers and veterinarians on the latest in dairy research.

Extension dairy scientist Don Ace was on hand to list

specific feeding standards, especially regarding trace minerals.

Ace pointed out that studies are pointing to a selenium deficiency in southeastern Pennsylvania, and that providing proper amounts of this trace mineral could eliminate some health problems in dairy animals. Good results have been obtained by incorporating the substance

with injections of vitamin E. The practice is thought to be good preventive medicine.

According to Lancaster County Agent Alan Bair, who co-chaired the meeting along with York County Agent David Norman, selenium has been incorporated into feeds at Atlantic Breeders Cooperative for several years. Results have been good and there is speculation that the famous "Ivanhoe" bull could have lived longer if this present feeding knowledge had been known 13 years ago.

There are reported to be a significant number of "downer" cows in the state of Pennsylvania. A remedy which might be considered for curing such animals is Epsom salt mixed in water, the veterinarians and feedmen were informed. Proper mineral balances are considered to be very important in feeding and "preventive medication."

Ace also looked at the dairy industry's economic picture for a moment, commenting that present milk production compared to a year ago is up about 10 percent. Milk prices have declined somewhat and are expected to level off

sometime between the first of the year and March 1.

Also featured on the evening program was Extension veterinarian Lawrence Hutchinson. He now holds the post formerly held by Dr. Sam Guss, who retired late last year. Guss was the main speaker at last year's dairy seminar, here.

The new Extension veterinarian centered most of his remarks on diseases in relation to nutrition of youngstock.

The people attending were cautioned against using more than one source of pre-medicated feed supplements due to the possibility of leaving meat and milk residues.

Each medicated feed additive is officially approved and fine if it is used by itself. But a combination of two such supplements fed to the same group of cows could lead to complications.

At the present time there is no medicated dairy feed on

the market, just supplements.

could be a solution to the problem.

Hutchinson also pointed out that zinc is short in the rations of many Pennsylvania dairy herds. Tracemineralized salts are not considered to be an adequate source of zinc in this area.

It has also been recommended that mineral feeding be incorporated through the ration itself, while at the same time maintaining a free-choice program.

Another point brought up by Hutchinson is that cows generally have a hard time maintaining proper rumen PH if they're on all fermented feeds. Bicarbonate of soda mixed into such feeds

If a cow eats more than a tenth of a pound of free-choice minerals per day, something might be wrong with her. A properly balanced mineral feeding program has much to do with having a healthy and productive dairy herd.

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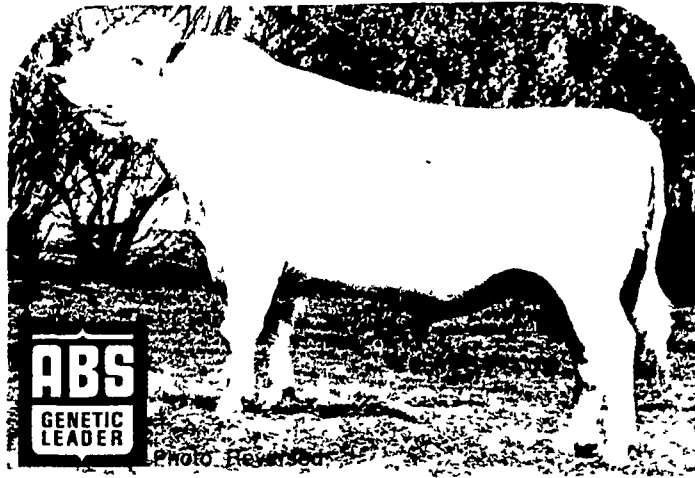
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