

# There are reasons to believe in magic cows

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NEWARK, Del. — Do you remember "brown cows?" You made them by adding cream to your favorite cola drink. Some people called them black cows but in either case they made a tasty beverage. Today a drink similar in nature being promoted by

the American Dairy Association is called a "magic cow." More than just the updating of an old standby makes a comment about the dairy industry as a whole...you may not have noticed but cows have gone from ordinary to magical in just a short half century. Consider that there are now less than half the

number of dairy cows in Delaware than there were 50 years ago—when the dairy industry reached its zenith in the First State. Then consider that these cows produce more than twice the amount of milk that their grandmothers produced... that's equivalent to a quadruple in production or a 300 per cent increase per cow. Now do you believe in magic cows?

The reason for the dramatic increases in milk production in the past 50 years is of course due not to witchcraft or sorcery but to the scientific wizardry of the Atomic age: improvements in animals nutrition and health, the development of antibiotics and the growing is enough to give even the staunchest nonbeliever a little faith in the national Agricultural Experiment

Station system—through which most of these improvements were developed. But the cow is not the only component of the dairy farm that has been magically transformed by progress. The dairyman of today is a better manager of labor, capital, time, animals and, ultimately, himself. Consequently, there aren't as many of them around anymore either. Many of the Delaware dairymen who have persevered through the changes in the industry are located in Kent County. According to Kent County Extension agent Dave Woodward, a former dairyman himself, this is due largely to historical reasons but also because this county is a good halfway point between rural Sussex County, which has a smaller market for the milk, and

urban New Castle County, which has fewer farms. "I still get plenty of phone calls from people wanting to get into the dairy business," says Woodward. "But anyone who gets into the business without prior experience is only fooling himself. And then again, it's an occupation that is so confining that you're more-or-less married to it."

Not only does he farmer's lifestyle have to be tightly meshed with his occupation

in dairying, but getting into the business involves a higher initial investment than other types of farming. Added to the land and equipment costs of regular farming are the costs of the animals and milking equipment. "With dairying," says Woodward, "there's more of an investment which doesn't increase your net worth...but there's also more of a cash flow all of the time once you've established yourself."

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## Funding sought for groundwater studies

**HARRISBURG** -- A resolution seeking high priority funding for detailed groundwater studies will be prepared by the Department of Environmental Resources' Water Resources Policy Advisory Committee for presentation to the General Assembly.

At its June 1 meeting the Committee selected a group of its members to draft the resolution and present it at the August 3 meeting for approval.

Committee members said there is a pressing need for detailed groundwater management data and plans and noted that the Department of Environmental Resources has been unable to do such work to date for lack of sufficient budget appropriations.

The Committee spent much of the June 1 meeting considering issues involved in water supply and allocation and what steps should be taken to prepare for another major drought.

After much discussion, it was generally agreed that the Commonwealth needs to consider a law covering

water allocation and withdrawal which would look at both surface and ground water and would have applicability throughout the state rather than in just the two areas — Delaware River and Monongahela River — where the most pressing problems now exist.

At its August 3 meeting the committee is expected to continue this discussion and develop in more detail a recommendation for this new legislation which could then be forwarded to the General Assembly.

Committee members also will vote on leadership for the group at the August 3 meeting, choosing from among candidates who represent the Pennsylvania Bar Association, Council of Farm Organizations and League of Women Voters.



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