

Caution marks Penn Stater's dairy outlook

By DIETER KRIEG
UNIVERSITY PARK —
"Most established dairy farmers in Pennsylvania are in a good financial position and this satisfaction will continue through 1979," says Penn State's dairy scientist Bill Johnstone. He made the comment before a group of bankers who were gathered here this week for the 1979 Agricultural Conference for Pennsylvania Bankers.



William Johnstone

"Any dairyman who has not shown good results this year should be looked at very closely as a credit risk," Johnstone advised. "If he can't make it now, then the next bad period will be very difficult," he predicted.

Johnstone is basically optimistic about what might be in store for Pennsylvania's milk producers. But he is also cautious, emphasizing that there is a delicate balance between supplies and demand. Small changes in demand result in drastic changes in price levels. Small changes have far reaching effects, he

also says there are no clear signals right now for expansion or reduction. Milk production has been stable.

Considering the present state of the situation, and the uncertainty of what Congress may do with milk support price legislation, Johnstone says dairy marketers are "nervous."

A relatively bullish outlook persists nonetheless, particularly among the nation's better dairy farmers. Milk production has been on the upswing in Pennsylvania, making it one of the five leading states in the country.

Growth of the dairy industry is evident in those counties where dairying has historically been strong, and decreases are being recorded in the same kind of pattern.

With government stocks of milk products reduced, and marketing activity brisk, there is a strong possibility for increased dairy imports. According to Johnstone, they're a near certainty. "I don't think there's any way to get away from it," he

responded to a question from one of the bankers. He noted that some observers say a big increase in imports could cause as much as a 12 cent drop per hundredweight in domestic milk prices.

Johnstone's words of caution also focused on dairy cooperatives' and handlers'

management, and the impact such management has on dairymen. "The financial condition of handlers is becoming much more crucial," Johnstone emphasized, noting that in one case farmers who shipped to a certain dairy received 18 cents on the dollar. Ad-

ditionally, he warns cooperatives against paying more than their treasuries can withstand. He considers both handler bankruptcy declarations and the short finances of some cooperatives to be conditions to which dairy farmers are especially vulnerable.

warned. He advises dairymen to study their expansion plans carefully, lest they undo a situation that has looked good now for many months.

All that considered, dairymen should keep an eye on Congress to get an idea of what might be done with the milk support price program, once it expires this Fall. He

Wildlife to be left in natural habitat

HARRISBURG - The Pennsylvania Game Commission is renewing its annual plea to persons sympathetic to wildlife to leave wild "youngsters" in their natural habitat, and not to encourage or entice wildlife to congregate in areas where the creatures become obnoxious.

With many young birds and animals in the field and forest at this time of the year, persons finding the tiny creatures may innocently believe the animals have been deserted or "orphaned." Such is not the case.

Usually the parents, frightened by the approach of humans, have taken cover a short distance away. They will return to the care of their offspring as soon as they are left alone.

Human sympathies are understandably with young rabbits, birds, fawn deer, etc. Annually, district game protectors are plagued with "orphaned" wildlife which would have lived normal lives had they been left in the field or forest.

Of equal concern are animals which are fed or otherwise attracted to particular locations, usually

to be viewed by humans. Special problems are created by those who feed bears, inducing the cute, cuddly creatures to come or remain in a certain area.

Later, these animals become a nuisance, constantly showing up for handouts, upsetting garbage cans, roaming through towns, climbing trees, frightening residents, etc. Then game protectors are called on to trap and relocate the nuisance bears, which often return quickly to repeat their upsetting and sometimes dangerous pranks.

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