

Houser honored as top herd owner in Lebanon County

BY LAUREL SCHAEFFER
Staff Correspondent

SCHAEFFERSTOWN - Climaxing their 50th year, the Lebanon County Dairy Herd Improvement Association met on November 13 at the Schaefferstown Fire Hall, here, for their annual meeting.

Highlighting the evening, which began with a delicious family style dinner, was the presentation of awards to members whose herds averaged over 700 pounds butterfat. Topping the list was Ruben Houser, Lebanon.

Houser's herd, which is on test for the first time this year, averaged 20,474 pounds milk and 766 pounds fat, out producing all other herds in the county in both categories. Following with a fat production of 729 pounds was the Bennetch Brothers herd, R2 Myerstown. This herd of 71 cows on test had a milk record of 19,358 pounds.

Roy E. Nolt, R1 Richland, had a fat record of 716 pounds for his herd with 44 cows on test. Nolt's herd averaged 18,820 pounds milk. Behind Nolt with a record of 705 pounds fat was the herd of Willow Maple Farm, R1 Newmanstown. This herd had the second highest milk production record with 20,416 pounds, just 58 pounds below the top herd of 1979.

Willow Maple also had the high individual cow for milk and fat records, a repeat performance of last year.

Also noted were the forty

herds producing over 600 pounds fat, and a total of 101 herds, with an average of five or more cows producing records over 400 pounds butterfat.

Lebanon County was ranked fourth in the state for milk production and ninth in butterfat production. The Lebanon County DHIA also has twelve herds on Owner-Sampler Test, eight of which are producing fat records in excess of 500 pounds, while the other four are above 400 pounds.

Presently 52 herds in the county are enrolled in the Somatic Cell Counting Program. Raymond Pruss, administrative assistant of state DHIA, reported that the fourth somatic cell counting machine would be installed in about a week. With this machine all interested dairymen should be able to be on the program by January or early February, he reported.

Pruss also commented on a relatively new program which would sample progesterone as a pregnancy test. Reports from New York where the testing is currently being used show that it is approximately 80 per cent accurate and costs about \$2.50 per sample. The state administrator said that Pennsylvania is not using the test and doesn't intend to do so until it is more accurate and less expensive.

DHIA will also start to use another method for calculating production averages. With this method, every herd will be adjusted



Ruben Houser's (left) dairy herd out produced other herds in Lebanon County. The herd averaged 20,474 pounds of milk and 766 pounds of fat. Roy Nolt, Richland and Marlyn Bennetch, Myerstown, also had herds averaging 700 pounds

of fat. Donald Bollinger of Willow Maple Farm, Newmanstown, owns the top milk and fat producing cow for the year. These awards were given at a recent Lebanon County DHIA banquet.

downward from two to three per cent, Pruss told the dairymen.

Another change in the DHIA policies was also noted by the state administrative assistant. This change would allow herds with 90 per cent or more registered cows to be classified as registered

herds. This would allow for a little leeway, Pruss commented, because presently there is none.

Harold Bollinger gave a brief state director's report, and Newton Bair, County Extension Agent, noted the progress DHIA has made in the past 50 years. He com-

mented that the Lebanon DHIA presently is testing a goat herd and made note of the Farm-City Tour planned for Farm-City Week.

Lebanon County Dairy Princess, Diane Maulfair, also addressed the large audience during the evening. An election was also held

for three directors whose terms expire December, 1979. Reelected for another two year term were, Robert Lentz, Kenneth Sellers, and Harold Bollinger.

Entertainment for the evening included a slide presentation by Glenn Eshelman.

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