

# The Milk Check

**TOM JURCHAK**  
County Agent



### YEAR'S END

Now that most of the statistics are in for 1980, we can examine what happened and why.

You may not think it's worth much to look back, but it's one way of finding out where we're headed. So, if we don't like what we see, we still have time to make some changes.

The important characteristics of 1980 were record high milk production, a reverse in a steady 40 year trend of declining numbers of dairy cows, very favorable milk price-feed price ratios and price support program purchases the highest in 18 years.

We'll try to take a closer look at each of these to see what we can expect this year so you can decide individually as well as collectively through your cooperatives and organizations what strategies you should adopt for the future.

### MILK FLOOD

The record high production of more than 128 billion pounds last year broke the previous high of 127 billion set back in 1964. It was the result of a larger number of cows, a record high production per cow and a feed price that was good in relation to the milk price.

The increase in cow numbers started in March 1980 and is already larger than the 1978 herd. By March of 1981 it is expected to be higher than the 1977 figure. The one percent increase in 1980 added nearly 100,000 cows and the end isn't in sight.

Added to the number of cows is the increasing number of heifers. As of January 1, there were a record high 40 heifers in waiting for every 100 cows in the milking herd.

The only steady trend you have left is increasing production per cow. It has averaged two percent a year for the last 14 years. But now your annual increases are up to three percent and last year averaged nearly 12,000 pounds per cow.

Part of the reason was that favorable milk price-feed price ratio. This is the number of pounds of 16 percent dairy ration you could buy with the price of one pound of milk. Back in 1977 it was down to 1.2. But in the last two years, it has averaged about 1.5 with early 1980 coming close to 1.6 before grain prices started to rise faster than milk prices.

### REACTION

As a result of the increasing milk production and legislation passed in 1977 that required a dairy price support at 80 percent of parity, the Commodity Credit Corporation started buying increasing amounts of butter, skim powder and cheese in late 1979.

That year they spent \$250 million and bought the equivalent of about one billion pounds of milk or less than one percent of the total milk production. However, in 1980 largely because of increasing milk production CCC bought \$1.3 billion worth of dairy products equal to more than eight billion pounds of milk or about 6.5 percent of all the milk produced.

Nothing in the year end statistics indicates that any of these trends started in the last two years is going to change. Another record year of milk production is expected in 1981 with increasing cow numbers and production per cow. Higher feed prices may slow down the increase, but unless there's another severe drought they won't stop it.

The present price support legislation doesn't expire until September 30 so CCC purchases are expected to continue at present high levels to strive for a support price at 80 percent of parity.

What happens after that depends on this session of Congress where the present price support legislation may be extended, amended or ended.

# Chester Extension offers workshops

**WEST CHESTER** - The Chester County Cooperative Extension Service of The Pennsylvania State University is offering classes in rug hooking and quilting.

The rug hooking classes will be held on Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1, 8, 15, 22 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The series of eight classes will teach the skill of rug hooking. Everyone will be provided with wool, burlap, and rug hook to do this traditional craft. You will make a traditional and contemporary design the size of a chair seat or wall hanging. The frame you need may be an oval or round embroidery hoop, old picture frame or 4 strips of wood about 14"x16" to form an oblong.

The Quilting Course will be held on Mondays, March 16, 23, 30, April 6 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The series of four meetings will cover basic techniques for handquilting. The instruction will include making a pattern, use of applique, and patchwork, and creating a pillow top. Instruction on how to make a quilting frame will be demonstrated.

There is a small fee for each of these courses. The courses will be held at the Extension Meeting

Room, 235 W. Market Street, 3rd floor, West Chester. For further information call 696-3500.

### Microwave Cooking Course

The Chester County Cooperative Extension Service will conduct a Microwave Cooking Course on Tuesdays, March 17, 24, 31, April 7 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. The same course will be offered at two different times. Classes will be held at the Extension Service Meeting Room, 235 W. Market Street (3rd floor), West Chester.

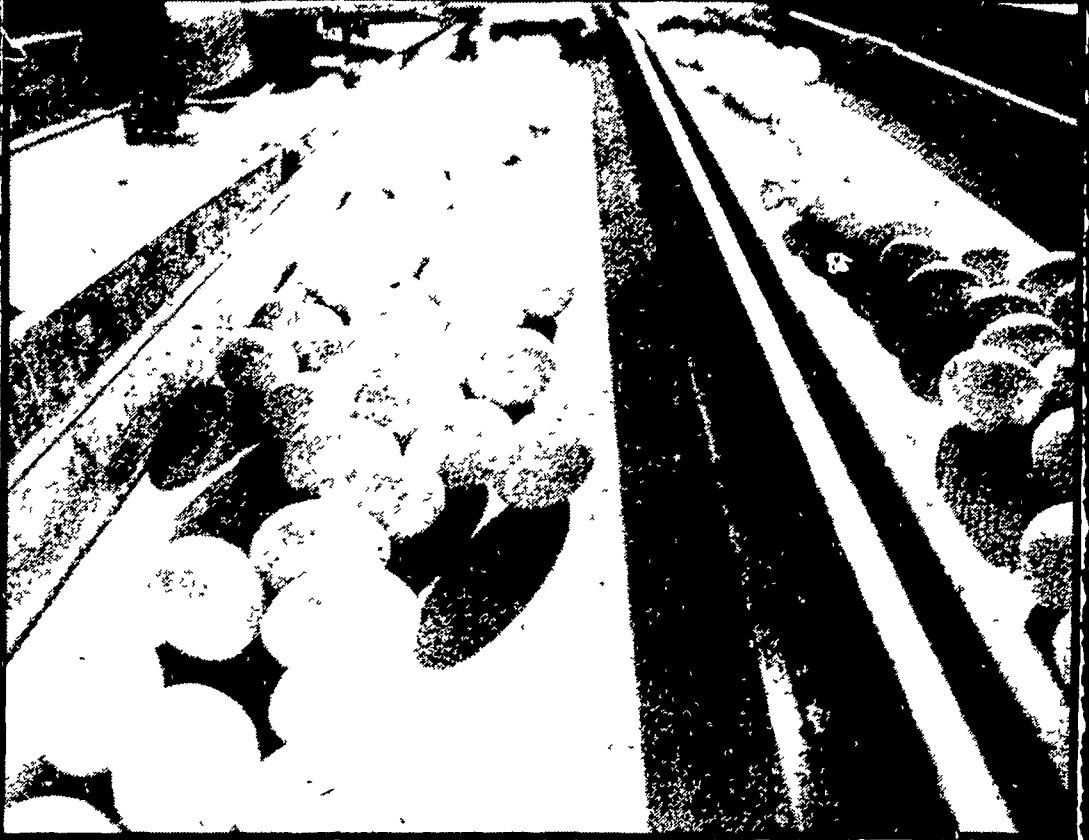
The series of four meetings will include basic cooking principles, actual meal preparation, discussion and demonstrations to show how every member of the family can prepare food in the microwave.

A variety of microwave ovens will be used through the cooperation of Gilbert's Appliance, 128 W. Market St., West Chester. The instructor will be Linda Z. Butler. There will be a small fee for the course. Registration will be due by Monday, March 9, 1981.

For further information call or write the Chester County Extension Service, Paul B. Dague Bldg., 235 W. Market Street (3rd floor), West Chester, PA 19380.

## STILL # 1

# Big Dutchman - the Original

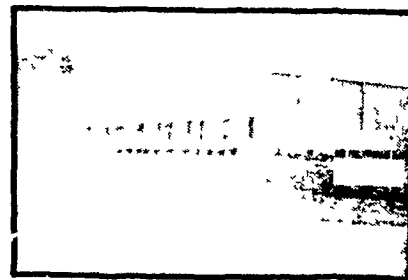


Big Dutchman cage systems are the "standard" by which all others are measured. So why not start your cage shopping with the No. 1 company in the field?

We can provide "all" the components that make up a complete cage system and therefore are able to guarantee reliability, control, cost savings and one-source service.

And remember, once your Big Dutchman system is completed, the competently trained staff of Hershey Equipment Company will continue to service it and provide spare parts at DISCOUNTED prices as it has been for over fifteen years.

**HERSHEY EQUIPMENT COMPANY, "WE SELL THE BEST & SERVICE THE REST"**



**H**  
**HERSHEY EQUIPMENT**  
**COMPANY, INC.**

SYCAMORE IND. PARK  
255 PLANE TREE DRIVE, LANCASTER, PA 17603  
(717) 393-5807  
Route 30 West at the Centerville Exit

*Designers of Quality Systems for Poultry, Swine and Grain Handling.*

## Pole Shed & Barn Material Center

### PRESSURE TREATED LUMBER

- SIZES:
- 2x4
  - 2x6
  - 2x8
  - 2x10
  - 4x4
  - 4x6
  - 6x6
  - 2x6 T&G

Excellent For:

- \* FARM BUILDING \* PATIO
- \* FENCE \* POLE SHEDS
- \* SUNDECK \* OTHERS

- 1x8 Barn Siding 6' to 16'
- 2x8 T&G Yellow Pine Barn Flooring

LARGE SELECTION OF ALL DIMENSION LUMBER

1 x 6 Rough Cypress Boards For Fence & Gates



For Low Prices on Roof Trusses Check with Musselman

Large Selection of **LAWRENCE HARDWARE**

- Door Hangers
- Brackets
- Track
- Bumpers
- Stay Rollers
- Latches

**FREE DELIVERY**

**EASY-COVER™**  
by Onduline  
**FARM ROOFING SALE!**



67' x 46' Sheet

- 25 Year warranty against leaks
- Four colors in stock



LARGE SELECTION OF **PANELING**

**MUSSELMAN LUMBER INC.**

200 BRIMMER AVENUE, NEW HOLLAND, PA

Phone **717-354-4321**

Hours: Daily 7 AM to 5 PM, Saturday 7 AM to 12 PM

