

# Schuylkill dairy producers have their day

BY SHEILA MILLER  
**CRESSONA** — Over 80 Schuylkill County dairy producers and commercial exhibitors attended the sixth Dairy Day, held

here at the Goodwill Fire Hall on Wednesday. Providing the participants with management tips for their operations were Penn State's Steve

Spencer and Michael O'Connor. O'Connor advised the group there are four ways to improve reproductive efficiency on the farm

—improved heat detection, checking cows and heifers before 6 a.m. and after 6 p.m.;

—breeding back at 50 days after freshening as long as there are no physiological problems;

—increasing conception rates by timing breeding at the end of standing heat and by careful handling of semen; and

—following a better herd health program with a veterinary clinic, with rectal examinations for reproduction problems, pregnancy checking after 35-50 days after breeding.

O'Connor also discussed the advantages of estrus synchronization in the dairy breeding program. He stated this tool allows dairy producers to breed heifers to superior A.I. sires, reduces the time spent in heat detection, insures heifers are bred to calve at 24



J. Allan Shoener, Schuylkill Co. Agent, hosted Penn State's Steve Spencer, center, and Michael O'Connor, right, at Wednesday's Dairy Day.

months, and is an overall labor saving procedure.

The Penn State dairy scientist recommended heifers be palpated at 15-18 months to determine whether they are mature reproductively, that they have no anatomical abnormalities and that they are cycling so that semen and prostaglandin aren't wasted on heifers that won't conceive.

O'Connor also recommended synchronized heifers and cows be bred by observing standing heat, rather than the 80 hour interval, popularly suggested, after the second prostaglandin shot (given at 11 day spacings).

"For successful estrus synchronization, sound management and planning is essential," he stated. "Decide when you want the calves and work backwards. And keep in mind you have to understand the mechanics of synchronization along with having the physical facilities to carry it out."

O'Connor brought the producers up-to-date on the popular, new tool of embryo transferring. He told the group there are 20,000 ET calves on the ground today.

The dairy scientist stressed ET should be used only with valuable cows. ET allows some valuable animals which are aged, injured, or diseased to produced calves they otherwise could not carry.

One of the reasons why O'Connor emphasized the importance of valuable animals only being used in ET is the cost of the procedure — each successful pregnancy costs around \$2000. And, the calves have to be the type that can be marketed two years down the road.

Looking into the future of ET, O'Connor predicted it will soon be possible to accurately sex embryos in order to maintain a favorable ratio of heifers and bulls. He also projected frozen embryos are on

the horizon, which will reduce the numbers of recipient animals needed when superovulating cows.

O'Connor pointed out the average ET calves have ratings for dam's productivity, dam's cow index, and sire's predicted difference of 19,846, 508, and +1063 respectively. But, he expressed some alarm for the range on these ratings which were 9618 to 35,574; -928 to 1753; and -1676 to 2064, respectively.

Penn State's Steve Spencer spoke to the group on the mechanics of milking. He pointed out there is little mastitis caused by machine problems which is the popular blame.

He advised the group to check for mechanical problems such as pump capacity, and suggested comparing vacuum regulators against weighted level regulators and the new, more effective electric ones. He noted the vacuum line size should be adjusted to the number of milking units.

Spencer reviewed some of the latest equipment for the dairy operation, some on the market and some on the horizon.

He caused a stir among D.H.I. supervisors when he cited a new milk meter developed in Denmark which can measure the pounds of milk and sample it too, while reading the cow's identification number from an ankle strap equipped with a tuning fork. He told the supervisors they wouldn't be obsolete just yet since the unit costs \$1500 a meter.

Spencer advised the producers to evaluate the advantages of the new equipment and see how it might fit into their own operations. But he cautioned them to make their decisions carefully, being mindful of cash flows and methods of investment.

## PUBLIC AUCTION

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Very old, lg rip saw (no motor), oak washstand, cained bot chairs, wood Grand Rapids Bissels hand sweeper, gas stoves, bobsled, brass floor lamps, Singer sewing mach., Eureka elec brrom, pots, pans, Tupperware, dishes, blender, toaster, folding table, RCA radio, record player, Xmas deck, sleeping bags, milk cans, Bucket seat, odd chairs, iron bed, beautiful hand made atgan (large).

Depression glass, 7 high vase, 3-tooted cake plate pink, 8" x4" high hobnail bowl-beautiful, pink candy dish & lid, sugar bowl-green, section dish & also pink, bowls, other very nice pc. also.

All in very beautiful cond Carnival glass, noritake, bowl, oak chest of drawers, post cards, pine rocker, baby scales with wicker basket top, old tool box, many fine old tools, pictures, end tables & coffee table, sofa & chair, pine jelly cup., cop wash kettle, Nat. Geographic Maz. 1927 & up-good cond., 2-pc. cherry setee top covered, 2-gold wing back chairs

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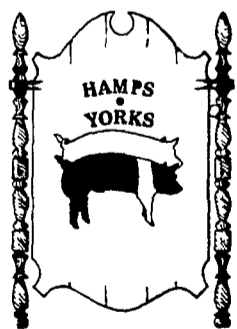
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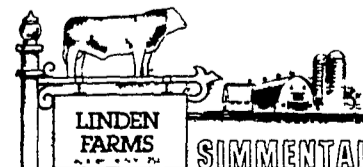
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