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Giant omelets launch May as Pa. Egg Month



Gov. Dick Thornburgh, who served as head chef for omelet cooking on steps of the Capitol Building this week, offers first helping of his culinary achievement to Eggatha, mascot of the state's egg promotion program. More photos Page A30.

HARRISBURG — Egg consumption should be showing a bit of an increase throughout the Commonwealth during May, which has been officially declared as Egg Month in Pennsylvania.

At least part of the rise in the use of eggs might be attributed to the "giant omelet extravaganza" events which are being staged at several locations in the state.

At just two of these events — in Lancaster and on the steps of the Capitol Building in Harrisburg — nearly 60 dozen eggs, along with more than 80 pounds of other ingredients, went into the five-foot pan for the cooking of the king-size omelets.

The Lancaster omelet, "prepared" by honorary chefs Mayor Arthur Morris and other county and state dignitaries, was whipped up on Penn Square in front of the Commonwealth National Bank on Friday, May 1.

Gov. Dick Thornburgh doffed the chef's hat and apron on Tuesday and led a contingent of legislative cooks in a re-run of the event in front of the Capitol Building.

And as Vicky Wass, state egg promotion specialist, emphasized in Lancaster; and echoed by Master of Ceremonies Chet Heim, deputy ag secretary, in Harrisburg, the omelet is prepared at a cost of just 19 cents a serving, making it one of today's most economical protein bargains.

Participating in the Lancaster event were Luther Snyder, deputy ag secretary; Rep. Noel Wenger, of Lancaster County; J. Leroy Esbenschade, president of the Lancaster County Poultry Association; the association's queen, Heidi Sue Miller; John R. Biechler, president of Commonwealth National Bank; Ronald Frazier, Mid-Atlantic Sales Manager for Regal Ware, Inc., which donates the pan; and Robert Bucher, vice president and manager of Commonwealth's Agri-Loan Department.

Taking part in the launching of Egg Month in Harrisburg, in addition to Governor Thornburgh and his wife, Ginny, were Sen. Henry Hager, president pro tempore of the Senate; Sen. Edward Helfrick, chairman of the Senate Ag Committee; Joseph Grieco, chairman of the House Ag and Rural Affairs Committee; and Penrose Hallowell, secretary of agriculture.

In proclaiming May as Egg Month in the state, Gov. Thornburgh paid tribute to the Commonwealth's poultry industry, which ranks among egg production leaders in the nation.

"Each year, Pennsylvania farmers produce 4.3 billion eggs valued at more than \$181 million," he said.

"Pennsylvania ranks third in the nation in the production of table eggs.

"The egg is one of the most complete sources of protein, with all the essential amino acids.

"The egg is also known for its versatility. Eggs are utilized in baking, cooking, garnishes and enjoyed alone. An egg contributes to other foods by enhancing flavor, extending dishes and by contributing to the overall nutritional value of a food dish.

"For all its many uses and its nutrition, the egg is also the least expensive source of protein on the market today. Egg prices have remained virtually stable for 20 years, while other prices have soared with inflation."

Lancaster in running for \$2 million in RCWP

LANCASTER — Lancaster County farmers are in the running to receive almost \$2 million in conservation cost share assistance this year through the federal government's Rural Clean Water Program, authorized under Section 208 of the 1977 Clean Water Act.

The application to the State RCWP committee earlier in March for these funds was submitted by the local Rural Clean Water Committee, consisting of the County Planning Commission, Lancaster Conservation District, Eastern Lancaster School District's vo-ag program, Extension, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and Farm Home Administration. The application was given top priority and was sent through ASCS to Washington, D.C.

The exact amount requested for

the non-point pollution control program in the Conestoga River watershed is \$1,930,513. Whether the county receives this amount and whether the application will be approved is still uncertain. However, an informed source stated "It looks like a shoo-in."

The decision on which applications are approved for the conservation work scheduled throughout the country rests with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block. It is anticipated he will be giving his blessing to projects within the next month.

Although the government may be chipping in close to \$2 million, farmers in the 110,000 acre project area would be investing \$2.3 million in conservation work on their farms.

According to Ray Brubaker, Lancaster County Executive Director for ASCS, a study con-

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PFA urges energy groups for leasing

BY JANE BRESEE
Staff Correspondent

TOWANDA — In an effort to help farmers and land holders being approached to lease their land to oil and gas companies, S. Paul Mazza, of the Pennsylvania

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Mifflin DHIA, B3; Somerset dairy princess, C30; Bedford DHIA, C34; Dairy Expo, D2; Bradford DHIA, D6; Brown Swiss All-American, D11.

Farmers Association Legal Services, spoke out strongly in Bradford County against the standard oil and gas lease, calling it "not only unfair but outrageous".

Sponsored by the Bradford-Sullivan County Farmers Association, the meeting of farmers and landowners was the 11th meeting since February that Mazza or one of his associates have attended to caution farmers against rushing into signing any lease agreement.

The attorney's campaign to help land owners began when he heard an agent for a leasing company brag that they were doing the farmer a favor.

"In reality," Mazza said, "the lease lacks many protections a property owner should have, and, in addition, pays a very small bonus on signing, or none at all, and the lease is for too long a time".

Mazza explained that at first he had prepared a check list for farmers to use as a guideline to a fair lease, but it was not used as he had anticipated. Then he formulated the idea of "energy groups", a combination of land owners with 500 or more acres who

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Overall champion of the Penn State Dairy Expo, Matt Seipt, of Lansdale, third from left, and reserve champion, Alan Wright, of Little Marsh, are flanked by show judges David

Norman, of Liberty, and Ginger Sechrist Myers, of Littlestown. For more Expo information and photos, turn to Page D-2.