

Mid-Atlantic gives Dairy Month 'REAL' kickoff

BY JOYCE BUYP
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CAMP HILL — The Middle Atlantic Advertising and Promotion Agency ushered in this year's June Dairy Month celebrations with an information seminar and kickoff luncheon last Friday at the Penn Harris Motor Inn.

About 100 milk industry representatives, dairy princesses, advertising specialists and media guests attended the "Dairy Promotion in the Eighties" program.

Seminar participants had the opportunity to compare real and imitation cheeses and spreads, plus taste-test this year's latest summer drink recipes, light, flavorful fruity creations with whimsical names like "Banana Nana", "Peaches VaVoom" and "Grape Gatsby."

And few guests could resist trying their hand at a new mail promotion game, a video-computer programmed to "pour" a dot (the milk) into two vertical lines (the glass). Players attempt to catch the milk in the glass while the computer "pours" from random locations. In the case of most of the players observed, the computer had the upper hand.

Anchoring the informational program was Dick Norton, manager of the host agency. Norton was interrupted frequently in his presentations with comments from his mechanical sidekick, the precocious metal dairy ambassador dubbed "Milky."

"Milky" is a meter-tall robot who converses intelligently via space-age technology, and an endless promoter of dairy products with a sense of humor and captivating personality.

According to Norton, a fifth of the nation's milk production comes from only a tenth of the country's dairy farms, compacted into about a two-hour traveling time radius in the lush farming area of the Mid-Atlantic states.

"Each of us must charge ourselves with spreading the good word of milk," Norton admonished the seminar audience.

Major thrust of this information campaign will focus on the Real seal program of identifying genuine dairy products. The agency is directing its efforts not only at consumer education on the quality identification indicated by the Real mark, but also in enlisting farm understanding and support for the dairy industry's "good housekeeping seal."

Special guest speaker was



June Dairy month luncheon speaker was Lancaster's Representative Noah Wenger, who says the Pennsylvania dairy industry is a success that "didn't just happen."

Lancaster Representative Noah Wenger who capped the luncheon program with a tribute to Pennsylvania's second largest industry.

"The consumer has been the biggest beneficiary of the milk industry," said Wenger. He noted the success of dairying in Pennsylvania didn't just happen, but was due to the dedicated and experienced family farm producers, backed up with educational and research programs. That ag research budget he added, is now becoming underfunded.

The legislator-farmer also praised founders of the milk marketing system.

"Fifty years ago, those leaders had the foresight to establish orderly marketing systems," Wenger said. "It seems to me that, before we make any changes, we better take a second look."

Wenger attributed Pennsylvania's producing of a billion pounds of milk, plus the state's leadership in exporting superior dairy breeding stock, to careful planning and management.

But with production increasing from 1979 to 1980 in the amount of some three million pounds, and an increase of ten thousand dairy cows, he also voiced concern over keeping the milk supply in balance with consumer demand.

Wenger did note Pennsylvania

milk prices are lower than those in numerous other marketing areas. His statistics showed, in 1969, it took the average wage earner eleven minutes to earn the cost of a half-gallon of milk, compared to eight and one-half minutes in 1978. Projections are for that earning time to drop even lower in 1981.

Wenger, who's vice chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, said a bill to name milk as the state's official drink has been reported out of committee and he has hopes of seeing it passed and signed before June is over.

Hank Geisinger, head of the Pennsylvania Milk Dealers' Association, spoke briefly to seminar guests, also pointing out milk prices to Pennsylvania consumers are not high compared to other areas of the country.

According to Geisinger, returns to Pennsylvania dairy farmers are higher than the national average. Dairy producers in the Commonwealth receive a return of 64 cents of every consumer milk dollar, while the national average is 55 cents. He added dealers have about two cents per dollar left for their efforts in handling and selling fluid milk.

Jim Shanley, marketing consultant for the American Dairy Association, briefed participants on milk promotional efforts at the supermarket dairy case. Point-of-purchase advertising, including colorful mobiles and display posters, will encourage shoppers to include milk with their favorite summer foods, like hot dogs, fruit and light snacking items, he said.

The highly-successful "Cheese Adds A Slice of Life" campaign is scheduled for a second phase September through November of this year. In addition to the full promotional scope of TV, radio and magazine coverage, contests will be staged for in-store cheese promotion displays.

During last year's 90-day promotion, cheese sales increased a whopping 90.7 million pounds, or a 16 percent increase over the previous year. Shoppers continue to favor national cheeses, purchasing natural types for 67 percent of the total 453 million pounds sold during that time.

Restaurant dairy foods promotional efforts were highlighted by Sharon Olson, food service specialist for the United Dairy Industry Association.

Milk advertising is making its mark in such popular fast food chains as McDonald's, Sambo's and Denny's, with 20 percent increases in milk sales occurring during promotional campaigns

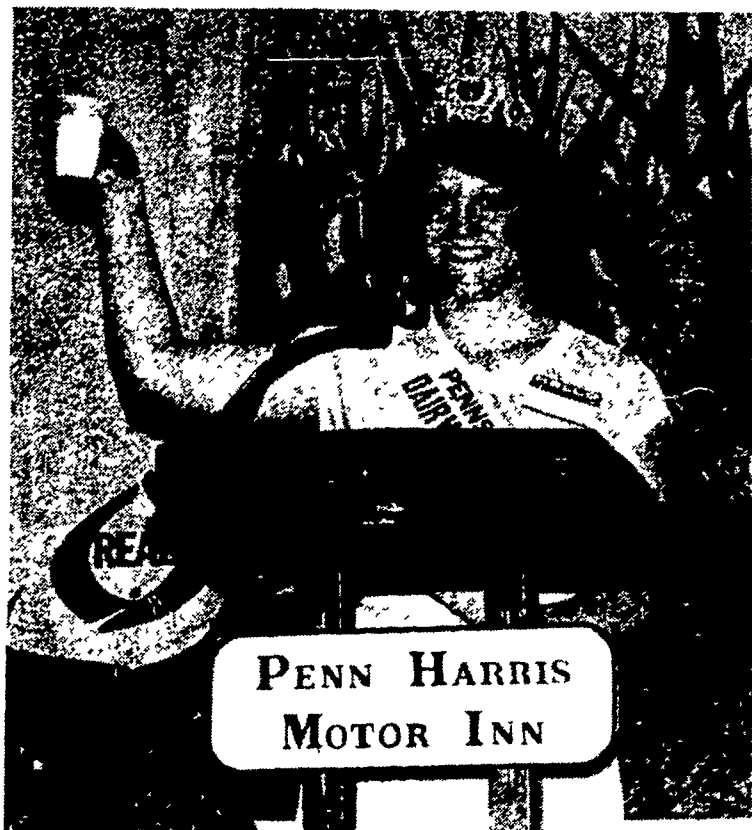
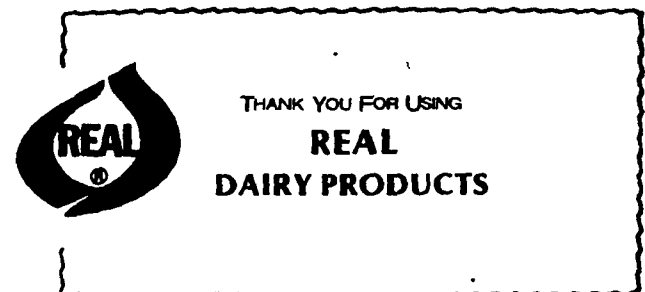


Hank Geisinger, head of the Pennsylvania Milk Dealers Association, brought dealer input to the dairy promotional session, saying that milk industry employees can help promote dairy products.

Industry advertising specialists are now running a "Real Pizza Maker" campaign, encouraging pizza chains to use only real cheeses in their pizza production.

Restaurant materials boost the Real quality cheese image and include signs, table tents and waitress buttons.

Give a REAL tip when dining out



Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Cindy Neely offered the official June dairy month milk toast at the Penn Harris kickoff luncheon.

Young Cooperator couples of Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers believe in letting food service establishments know how they feel about receiving real dairy products with a meal out. The cards are designed to be left behind with payment and courtesy tip after restaurant dining.-JB