

AM-PM test requires monitor

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, July 11, 1981—A37

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — During the past decade, there has been a need to streamline the DHI Testing Program. As dairy herds have become larger, it becomes more difficult on some farms to have milk samples taken at both evening and morning milkings, says University of Maryland dairy professor, J. Lee Majeskie.

DHI supervisors have been able to supplement their income by enrolling herds on the unofficial owner-sampler program. With this program, the dairyman is responsible for weighing milk, obtaining samples and recording the information. There is less cost to the dairyman and less time involved for the DHI supervisor.

Although owner-sampler records provide the same production and management information for a dairyman, the records are unofficial and can be used for only management purposes.

In an attempt to increase the number of official DHI herds tested by a supervisor and reduce cost to the dairyman, the DHI AM-PM program was developed.

This testing program requires a monitoring device for herds enrolled in this official testing program. The electronic device is attached to the vacuum pump or bulk tank to record the milking time, and determines the milking intervals so correct factors may be used to estimate production for the 24-hour period.

An unofficial AM-PM program is available to herds without a monitoring device. Some people are concerned that a considerable amount of production information for genetic evaluation is being lost to herds on the unofficial AM-PM program and have pushed to make it an official program.

However, at the recent national DHI meeting in Fresno, California,

the voting delegate body strongly defeated a proposal to make the AM-PM program without a monitoring device an official program.

When a dairyman enrolls his herd in a DHI program, many factors, including costs, are considered. A less costly unofficial program may be satisfactory to a dairyman who has a commercial herd of unregistered cattle and only wants to use the records to help him more effectively manage his herd. Once this decision is made, these records cannot be used for genetic evaluation of males or females.

The loss of genetic information from cows on unofficial programs causes some concern to the A.I. Industry. If considerable information is being lost unofficial records are not being used for sire evaluation, a revision of the present policy could include some of these records in sire proofs.

With the method presently being used, unofficial records could be included without altering the accuracy of the sire proof.

One reason that the dairy cow has improved genetically during the past few decades has been the unbiased collection of data by DHI supervisors. If a dairyman wants official records, the DHI, DHIR and DHI AM-PM (with monitor) programs are available.

It is extremely important not to change a tremendously successful DHI program in order to make more data available for genetic evaluation of sires. The additional production information would serve little purpose if the reliability of the information was reduced.

Before the Industry considers accepting records from the unofficial AM-PM program, there must be some very strict and

definite guidelines established to give a degree of integrity and authenticity to the records.

First, a scheduled milking time must be recorded with the State DHI Manager or Extension Dairyman in charge of the DHI program and the DHI supervisor.

Secondly, the surprise element must be put back into DHI testing so that the dairyman, would not know when the supervisor would be at the farm.

Thirdly, a refusal to test would automatically eliminate the herd from being tested for that month, and in most cases, two refusals would jeopardize the official status of the DHI records.

The strength of the DHI program would be weakened if the Industry recognizes AM-PM records as official without a monitoring device at the present time. Only when all states are able to enforce the requirements necessary to verify the data from the unofficial AM-PM program should it be considered official.

Until that time, let the AM-PM program without a monitoring device serve the purpose for which it was designed to help dairymen manage their dairy herds more effectively, concludes Majeskie.

Correction

Jean B. Massey, of Elmer, New Jersey, who wrote the letter in the July 3, 1981 issue of Lancaster Farming, page A12, entitled "N.J. has dump problems too" requested a correction be made to the paragraph concerning farming the land.

She pointed out "no root crops can be raised on the treated land for three years. And soybeans are not to be grown on seepage ground according to a representative of the D.E.P."

Collins to head U. of Del. Ag Engineers

NEWARK, Del. — Norman E. Collins has assumed leadership of the University of Delaware's department of agricultural engineering.

A member of the department since 1965, Collins is a specialist in energy conservation. A native Delawarean, he grew up on a farm near Middletown. He holds a B.S. in agriculture from the University of Delaware, an M.S. in agricultural engineering from the University of Maryland, and a Ph.D. in civil engineering from the University of Pennsylvania.

Collins is best known in the state for his studies of the energy requirements of poultry production — an ongoing project which involves him as a researcher for the University of Delaware's Agricultural Experiment Station, together with Extension agricultural engineer Ernest

Walpole, and members of the Delmarva broiler industry. With Extension agricultural engineer, Tom Williams, he has also studied the energy used in producing crops on local soils.

He is currently working on a pilot project designed to use solar energy as a heat source during the early stages of poultry growout, and is collaborating with another colleague, Kenneth M. Lomax, on a study of energy use in mushroom production.

He was named Young Engineer of the Year in 1979 for the North Atlantic Region of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers, and an Outstanding Educator in 1975.

Collins replaces Ernest N. Scarborough, who has stepped down after 13 years as department head in order to devote more time to teaching.

Fire damages co-op plant

LAUREL, Md. — An early morning fire on Thursday damaged a butter and dried milk manufacturing plant owned by Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Association, said co-op spokesman Robert Rawlins.

Ten fire companies battled the blaze which was confined to the

bag room in one of two dryers as well as the roof at the Laurel plant. The cause of the fire is unknown.

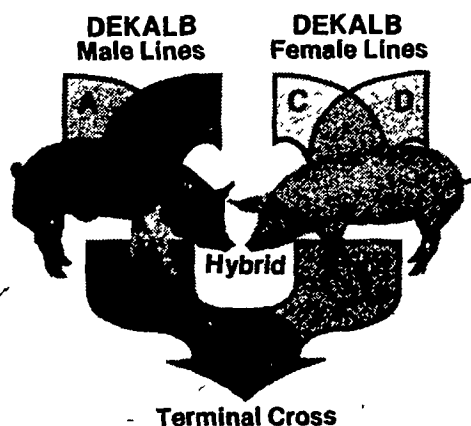
Although necessary repairs may take up to three months, the fire will not drastically hinder plant operations, Rawlins explained.

"The second dryer will be able to handle all the surplus milk."

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AGAIN, OUR SINCERE THANKS TO ALL THAT HELPED MAKE THE OPEN HOUSE A BIG SUCCESS

NOTE:
Anyone who was unable to attend the Open House, The Lissco representative plans to be in the area the week of June 13. Contact Farmer Boy Ag for more information



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