

## Extension lends a helping hand at milking schools

UNIVERSITY PARK — Every day 12,000 Pennsylvania dairy farmers scramble out of bed before sunrise, stumble through the crisp morning air to a waiting barn, and proceed to harvest the milk that pays their bills, clothes their children and ultimately keeps the farm afloat. Ten hours later they repeat the laborious ritual.

For many, milking is something to finish before moving on with other chores. And some farmers have been milking so long, they

could probably do it with their eyes closed.

But without a doubt, milking is the single-most important task on the farm. And, unless a farmer observes proper milking procedures and harvests the maximum amount of milk from a cow in a sanitary environment, the hours spent developing the finest nutrition, breeding and replacement raising programs are all for naught.

The Penn State Cooperative

Extension once again offers the popular, Milking School, presented throughout the Commonwealth by Extension specialists, county agents and veterinarians.

According to Penn State officials, the 8-year-old program has educated an approximate 6,000 dairy farmers in machine handling and udder health.

"Of all the programs that I've been associated with in my 28 years in Extension, the Milking Schools have been the most

popular over the longest periods of time," commented Don Ace, Penn State dairy Extension specialist.

As a result of the program's success, Ace said the Extension had to train more people to run the program so that additional schools could be scheduled. Currently, 15 schools are scheduled and 10 more may be added, Ace said.

The Milking Schools will feature development of the mammary system, anatomy of the udder, milking machine function,

physiology of milk secretion, cleaning and maintenance of milking equipment, mastitis and milking techniques. Penn State has produced slide sets and films especially for the program.

For more information regarding Milking Schools dates and locations, contact your local Extension agent for details.



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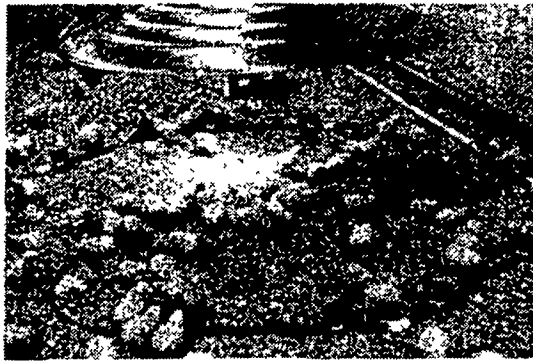
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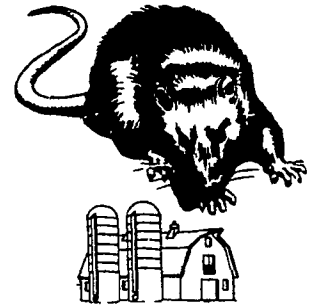
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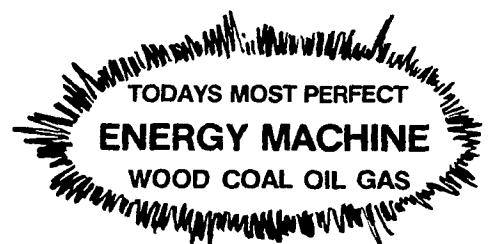
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