

# Delmarva dairy day features protein needs

DOVER, Del. — The first part of the two day Delmarva Dairy and Livestock Seminar was held on Tuesday, January 25 at the Sheraton Inn in Dover, De. The second part of the meeting will be held at the same location on February 4.

This is the first time Delaware and Maryland have combined their state dairy days, and organizers of the event, pleased with the results, plan to do the same thing next

year, according to Delaware extension dairy specialist George Haenlein. The seminar is sponsored by Delmarva Dairy and Livestock Council, in cooperation with the Delaware and Maryland Cooperative Extension Services.

The presence of 30 industry exhibits added color and interest to the seminar, and also helped defray programming costs.

A major highlight of the first day's program was a talk on

protein solubility and cows' nutritional needs by Mike Hutjens of the University of Illinois. Traditionally, dairy farmers have believed that cows need a certain percentage of protein in their rations, and it is not important whether that protein comes from alfalfa, soybeans, urea, or any other protein source. However, Hutjens says new research has shown that the source of protein in a cow's diet really does matter.

Proteins are not all equally soluble, he says, which means that cows cannot turn them all into milk and meat equally well. This little known fact accounts for some of the production differences we see in herds that are fed different rations that have the same percentage of protein.

Even a crop like alfalfa has different amounts of usable protein depending on whether it is fed as green chop, as green haylage or as brown haylage. Temperature is one of the factors that affects the solubility of the protein and thus its usefulness as a source of amino acids derived from protein.

Researchers are only now beginning to find out which sources of protein are most usable. It is

likely that some out-of-fashion feedstuffs like toasted or expanded soybeans will regain popularity if research shows them to have more usable protein than other choices. Haenlein did extensive nutrition studies with expanded soybeans and expanded corn in the early 1960s.

Richard Erdman of the University of Maryland followed up with a new way to bring up the protein content of corn silage. He said liquid ammonia not only adds to the nutritional value of corn, but also helps to preserve it.

The second day session, which will begin at 10 a.m. on Feb. 4, will be devoted to such subjects as reproduction, forage, and waste management.

## Dairy, livestock forecast

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creating the disastrous climate for livestock producers in 1982.

In the beef industry, Moore pointed out that the price producers received for feeder cattle had dropped \$32 over the past two years and slaughter cattle prices have kept cattlemen operating in the red for about 2½ years. Helping to add to the financial dilemma of the beef producers are higher retail costs for red meat and a decrease in per capita consumption since consumers are switching to cheaper meats like poultry and fish.

Moore's forecast of "cloudy sunshine" for the red meat industry was reflected in his estimate of what prices might be in 1982, all of which were at or below breakeven costs.

His February beef price prediction was \$64 compared to a breakeven cost of \$68.64; April, \$63 compared to \$65.16; June, \$64 compared to \$63; October, \$67 compared to \$65; and December, \$67.50 compared to \$68.50.

The hog industry didn't get much of an optimistic outlook from the Penn State economist, despite

reports that producers are projecting fewer farrowings. Moore contended that since the trend is to fewer producers raising the majority of the hogs, the operations' sizes prevent them from cutting back on inventory drastically.

Moore's February hog price prospects were \$48 compared to a breakeven cost of \$47.40; April, \$49 compared to \$48.10; June, \$53 compared to \$47; and October, \$48 for both price and breakeven.

According to Moore's predictions, 1982 will leave only a slim margin between profits and losses in either the beef or pork business. And, as one of the seminar participants said, it becomes a necessity for producers to watch every dollar. This Lebanon Co. cattleman confided that he eliminates the cost of livestock auction commissions by marketing his beef directly to a local butcher. And last year, he said, his accountant advised him to go out of the pork and broiler businesses completely.

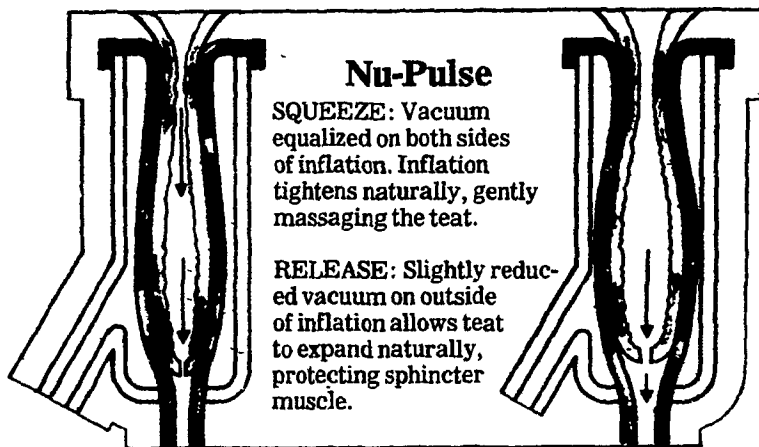
This year, good record keeping will become as vital for the farmer as rain. N. Alan Bair of Atlantic Breeders Cooperative stressed

that records on finances as well as breeding and production will play a major role in each farmer's economic success.



Speakers at the Lebanon Valley National Bank ag seminar last Wednesday included: from left, Rep. Noah Wenger; USDA's Charles Shaw; ABC's Alan Bair; and Penn State's Lou Moore.

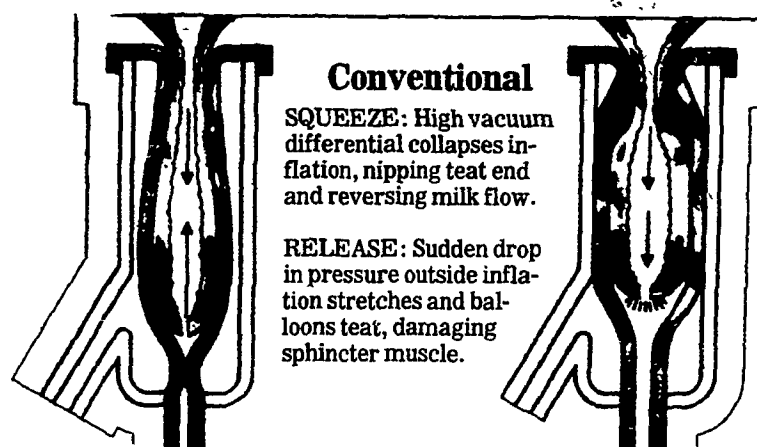
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