

Lancaster Dairy Days

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some feedmen should be put on a Dairy Day program in the future.

The three veterinarians were also in agreement that Johne's disease is getting to a point that statewide eradication efforts may be needed. They urged groups like the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association and the Pennsylvania Holstein Association to get behind such a program.

"Little is being done about Johne's," Dr. Kooker said.

"There is no treatment and no good vaccine, although one is now being tested in the Midwest."

The panel explained that while the disease shows up in more mature animals, about 4 to 5 years of age, it may be carried since calfhood. It usually crops up in a cow after a period of stress, such as freshening.

Among other topics touched upon by the veterinary panel were the suggestion that purchased animals be retested before entering a herd even though papers show they already have been tested, a recommendation that a pre-conditioning vaccination program be required on a statewide basis prior to shipment, and a preference for feeding whole milk to calves that are to become replacement heifers, particularly during cold weather when the

caloric value of milk replacers may not be enough to sustain a calf.

A highlight of the first day's program on Monday was a panel of four dairy farmers, who represented both the large and small of area operations. While of different sizes, each have operations showing returns over feed costs of \$1700 to \$2300 per animal.

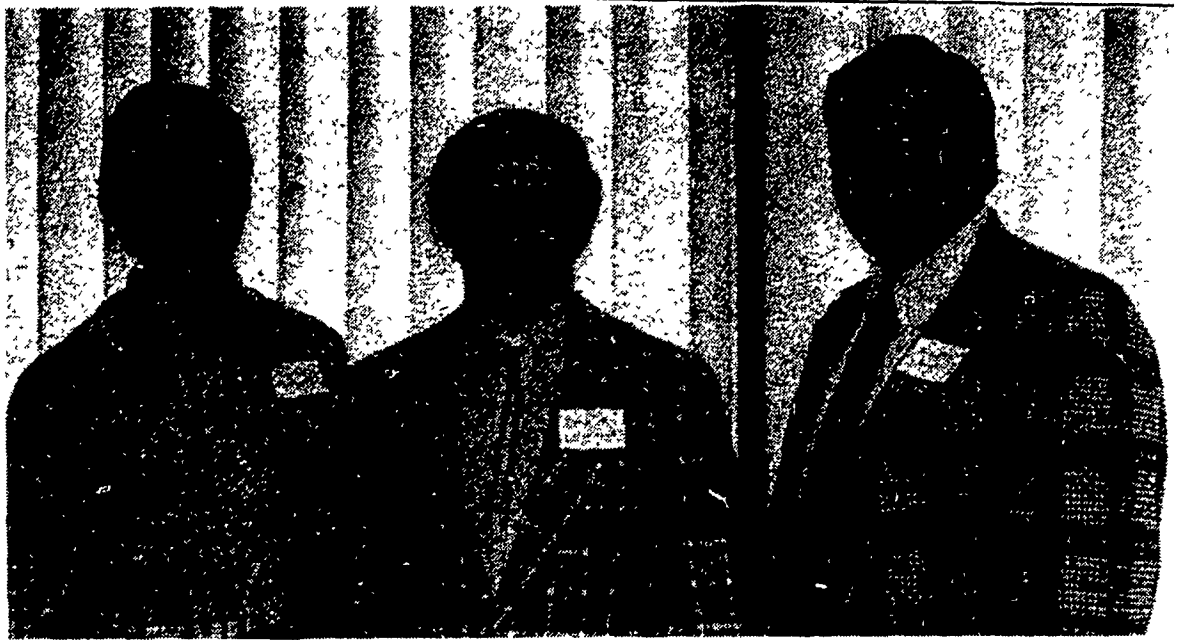
Representing the smaller dairyman were Bennel Z. Lapp, an Amish farmer from the New Holland area, and Ronald Lehman, Lancaster. The larger operators were John Harnish, Lancaster; and Fred Seipt, of Lansdale.

Of most interest to the audience, at least as far as the number of questions directed at panelists, was Lapp's operation of 45 cows. He lead the Lancaster County DHIA last year and has a herd average of about 23,000 lbs. on a 3X daily milking schedule.

"It's a 60-acre family farm," Lapp explained.

"We process our own milk and retail everything, making better than \$14 a hundredweight. I won't say how much because it might invite more competition."

The herd average has climbed from 15,000 lbs. just five years ago. He credits stress on nutrition, rigid



Dairy farmer panel which discussed programs for increasing returns over feed costs at Lancaster County Dairy Days include, from the left, Ronald Lehman and John M. Harnish, of Lancaster County; and Fred Seipt, of Montgomery County.

cutting, better care of dry cows and heifers and most important no major problems and the blessing of the Lord.

"I'm not a fan of termented feed," Lapp said,

"Because we retail the milk ourselves, we find that mixed hay gives a better flavor that the customer's want. We never feed

anything fermented before milking. I'm fussy about the hay, too. I'll crawl on top of a load and open two or three bales before I buy."

Lehman, who has a 19,700-lb. average with just 28 cows, is also a devoted hay man.

"Nothing is more important than good hay," Lehman said.

Both Harnish and Seipt feed more fermented feeds due to the larger herds and the labor involved. Their herd averages are right around 18,000 lbs.

Lapp puts a lot of importance on his heifer program and poor producers don't get a second chance. They're culled pretty quickly and don't go for beef but go into other milking herds.

For example, one first-calf heifer is a 24,000-lb. producer and

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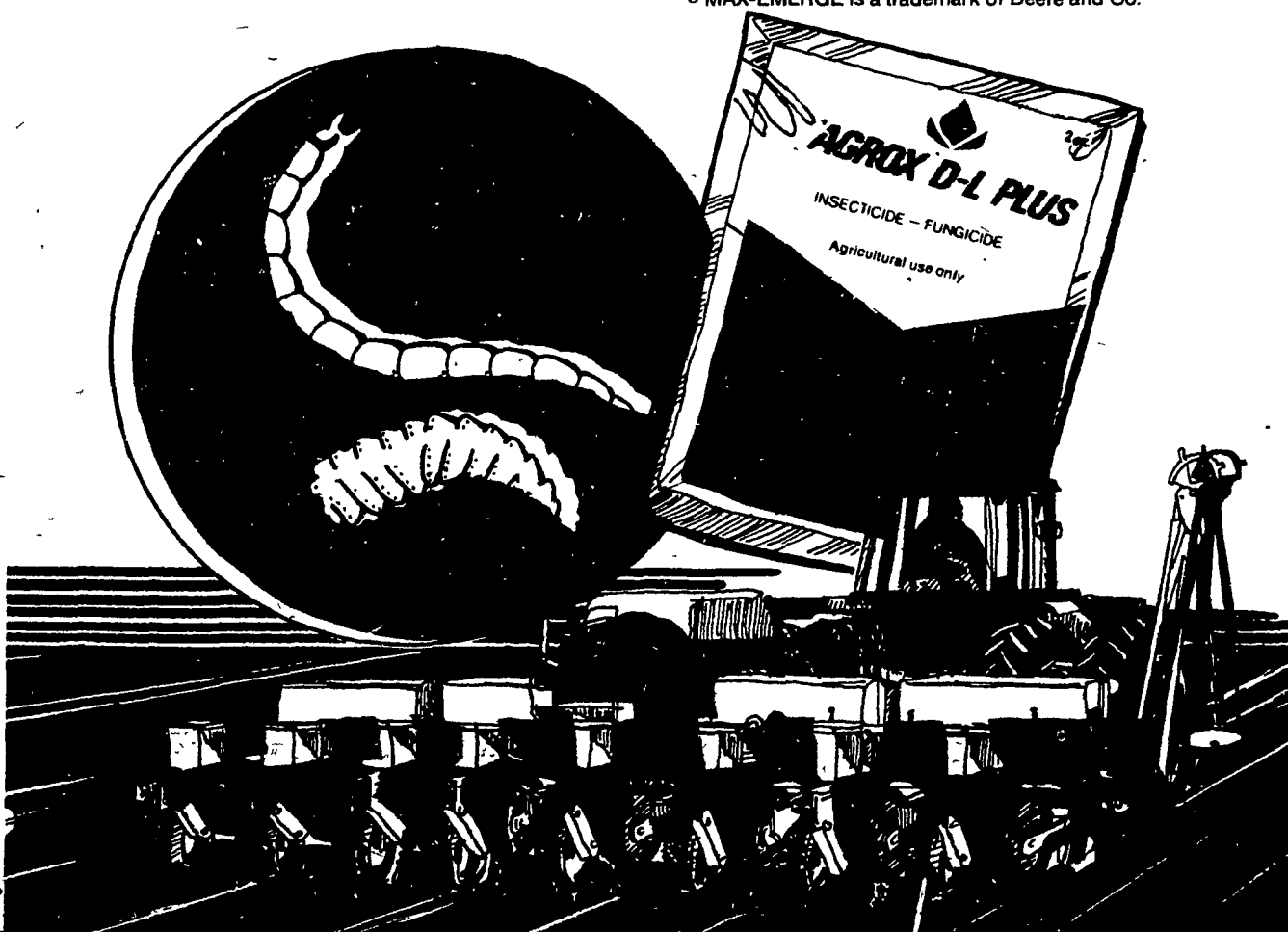
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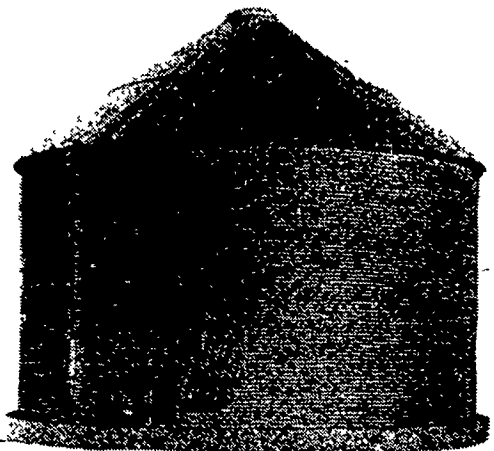
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