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Buyers threaten boycott

April 1 is "ID-Day" for Pa. hog producers

BY SHEILA MILLER

LANCASTER — The Lancaster Stockyards was the scene Tuesday evening for a meeting of packers and livestock market representatives, state veterinarians, and legislators. What prompted this serious get-together and four-hour discussion which led to two resolutions that could dip into hog producers' pockets? Swine identification — or the lack of it — in hogs heading to Pennsylvania slaughter plants.

Although required by law since last May, Pennsylvania's swine producers have been slow to incorporate identification programs into their management routines. Even though more than 4,000 producers have requested farm identification numbers from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Industry, many more hog farms in the state have not received these unique numbers. And, of those farms that received numbers, there are some that continue to

send hogs to market without the required tag or tattoo.

According to Chief State Veterinarian Max A. Van Buskirk Jr., implementation of the swine identification regulations were held in "abeyance until last October." He explained the BAI decided to take "the soft approach" in encouraging hog producers to comply. He said the Department went so far as permitting farmers to move unidentified hogs if the packer or marketer agreed to provide the necessary traceback.

"Now, after an unusual number of unidentified market hogs were restricted last week due to swine tuberculosis, packers can no longer live with the problem. And we've reached the point where people are watching to see if we're going to do anything about enforcing these regulations," observed Van Buskirk, adding that it's time to "put up or shut up."

Packers are pushing to get the state's regulations enforced due to

the losses they experience each time an unidentified, diseased hog is condemned and taken off the rail. With no traceback markings, the packers have no way of determining which producers are shipping sick hogs and have no way of protecting themselves from future losses.

Since the Packers and Stockyards Act requires that producers be paid for hogs moved through marketing stations within a short time period, most farmers

already are paid before the packers discover any diseased animals. Where a packer buys directly from a farmer, there is more control over payments and most packers stipulate payment based on cut and grade.

"If a packer gets burned once by a farmer with diseased hogs, they probably won't buy there again, or else they'll buy subject to passing inspection," said Van Buskirk. "Packers aren't going to haggle with farmers over the loss of

diseased hogs they've already bought and paid for, but they aren't going to buy any more from that farmer, either."

Hogs infected with swine tuberculosis pose special problems for packers because federal law requires the meat from these hogs to be cooked at high temperatures for long periods before it can be used for human consumption — this treatment usually renders the meat too soft and devalues it.

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Mktg. conference attracts 4 states

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

LANCASTER — The decision to include Delaware and New Jersey in what was originally the Pennsylvania-Maryland Roadside Marketing Conference, proved successful this week at the Host Farm, here, as over 600 farmers and merchants gathered for the three-day sessions.

Now christened the Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference, the sessions are in their 16th year and according to Eugene McDowell, manager of the Retail Farm Market Division for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the participants were "very enthusiastic and taking an active interest in the programs."

The highlight of the conferences occurred Wednesday evening at the annual banquet when three of Pennsylvania's marketers were entered into the Farm Market Hall of Fame.

Receiving the Pennsylvania certified retail farm market award for 1982 was the Weiser family of Weiser Orchards near York Springs in Adams County.

The Orchards, in operation for 42 years, are managed by Everet Weiser and his three sons. Their 850-acre operation includes 500 acres of corn, 200 acres of fruit, 20 acres of vegetables, 140 acres of barley, 750 head of beef cattle and 500 hogs.

Some determinants which helped the Weisers win the award

were that all fruits and vegetables sold in their market were grown on their farm and that the market area is nicely landscaped and is kept clean.

The Maynard Rothenberger family of Lansdale in Montgomery County won the Hall of Fame Milk Juggers award for 1982. They operate a 350-acre dairy farm with 250 head of registered Holsteins. Their main crops are corn and alfalfa for cattle feed.

All the milk produced by the 125 cows is sold through the jug milk store they opened in 1971. Milk is sold in pitcher pack plastic. They also sell ice cream and some local baked goods. In the past five years, they have gotten involved in plant sales, both vegetable and bedding. The farm also produces sweet corn, and pumpkins.

The entire Rothenberger family is involved in farm production, processing, sales, and record keeping. The family consists of Maynard and Betty Rothenberger, their daughter Donna and her

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At the Pa. State Convention

ET calf tops Holstein Sale

BY JOYCE BUPP
Staff Correspondent

ERIE — An embryo transplant heifer calf, bred and consigned by Lester Poust of Muncy, topped the Pa. State Holstein Convention ballroom sale Thursday evening at the Erie Hilton.

The 48 head set a new sale high of \$5858 before a standing-room-only crowd of several hundred in the Hilton's elegant ballroom.

Mun-Cre Christopher Medina-ET sold for \$14,500 to Ronald

Benson and John Alo of New Berlin, New York.

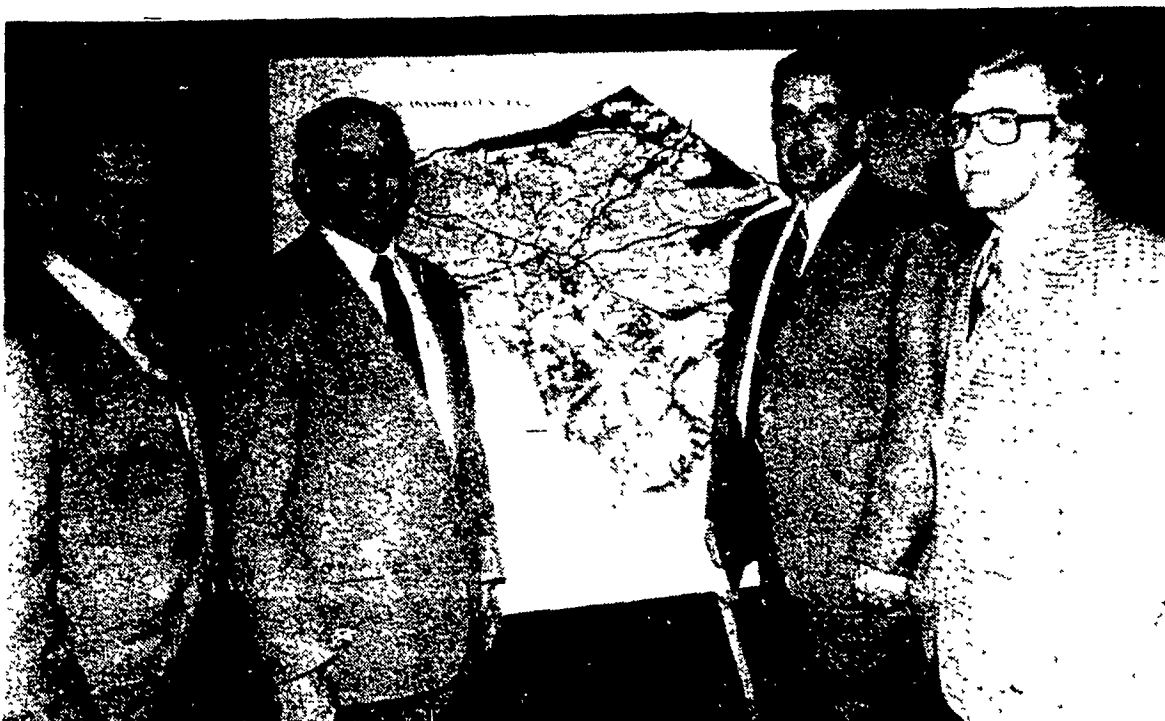
The August-born heifer is sired by Browndale Sir Christopher and from a maternal line of 3 generations of Excellent dams with high production records and fat test of 4 percent.

Her dam by Elevation is 2E-93 with a 6-year-old, 365-day lactation record of 27,457 milk and 1,087 fat. Grand dam is 3E-92 by Sunnyside Standout, also with records of 27,000 milk and 1,100 fat and third

dam was 3E-92. A maternal sister by Milu Betty Chief topped Poust's September partial dispersal at \$32,000.

Second high animal was Golden Circle Pete Monica, a September 1981 heifer bred and consigned by Paul and Sharon Fox of Rockwood. M. Thomas and Cindy Shaeffer of Carlisle purchased this winner of several area summer shows for \$13,600 by Straight Pine Elevation Pete. She is from 3 generations by

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Speaking to a group of 70 farmers and students Thursday evening at the Lampeter-Strasburg High School were: from left, Marc Phillips from Congressman Robert Walker's office; Amos Funk, Lancaster Ag Preserve Board chairman; Rep. Jere Schuler from Pennsylvania's 43rd District; and John Ahlfeld, acting director of the Lancaster Ag Preserve Board. Their topics were, of course, farmland preservation.

Fed. ag preserve bill still in committee

LAMPETER — U.S. Rep. Robert Walker (R-16th) introduced legislation last month that calls for a system of federal incentives for farmland preservation. This bill, called the Farmland Preservation Act of 1983, remains in the House Agricultural Committee in Washington, D.C., reported Marc Phillips, who represented Walker Thursday evening at a special meeting on agriculture preservation called by the Garden Spot Future Farmers of America at Lampeter-Strasburg High School.

Roughly 70 Lancaster County farmers and FFA students listened as various speakers presented views on farmland preservation efforts in the county, state, and nation. According to Garden Spot FFA President Darrel Mills, this meeting was called during National FFA Week to demonstrate the concern young people have about farmland preservation.

More than 200 people were invited to attend.

Phillips noted that Rep. Walker is hopeful that hearings on HR 412 will be scheduled in the near future, although no date has been set. The Walker aide noted that there seems to be a lot of interest in the bill from fellow Congressmen.

HR 412, which Phillips described as a "sensible approach to farmland preservation," would allow incentives to be written into the tax code in the form of an exemption from capital gains taxes for farmland owners who agree not to use or permit their land to be used for any purpose other than farming.

The capital gains tax exemption would be available to any owner of farmland who sells the property with a deed restriction limiting the farmland's future use to agriculture. This exemption would be a one-time offer on each farm,

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