

Lehigh Valley pays dividend

LANSDALE — Lehigh Valley Farmers, dairy cooperative of Lansdale, is paying its producer members another patronage cash dividend or distribution this month.

A \$150,000 disbursement is the second payment made to Lehigh shippers this year. A payment of

\$200,000 was made in the spring. President Alpheus L. Ruth, in announcing the patronage cash dividend, said "With all the uncertainties surrounding today's dairy operations and government-administrated deductions, it's a real treat to put something back in the farmer's pocket."

The total \$350,000 patronage cash distribution represents approximately five cents per hundredweight for all milk shipped during the 1982 year and means about \$350 for the average shipper.

The dividend is part of an overall 24-cent patronage refund for the year, totaling \$1,750,000.

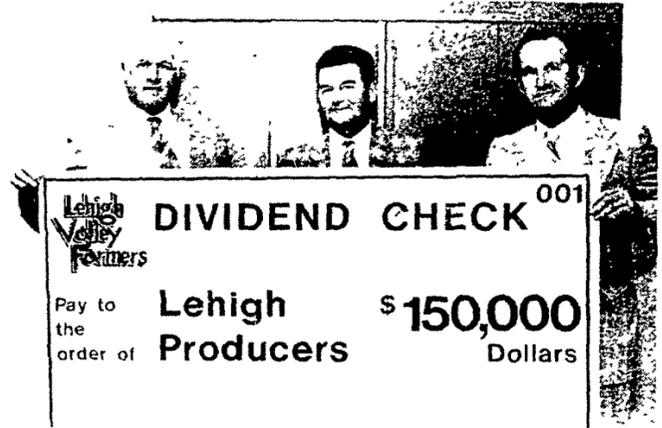
The dividend was paid partly in cash, amounting to \$350,000 and the

balance in equity certificates totaling approximately \$1,400,000.

Funds for the dividend and the equity allocation were generated from operating profits of the Lehigh Valley Farmers cooperative and the Atlantic Processing federation in which Lehigh belongs.

Lehigh Valley Farmers has a long-term contract with Atlantic Processing, Inc. of Allentown, PA., for the purchase of all milk produced by Lehigh members.)

Lehigh Valley Farmers financial growth has been attracting new members to the cooperative, which began the year with a roster of 1,139 dairy farmers. Today's membership is 1,275.



Oversize check for \$150,000 is presented by Alpheus L. Ruth, president, left, and Robert Gehman, right, treasurer, to Dice Statler, who accepts on behalf of other members of Lehigh Valley Farmers. Amount represents total of patronage cash dividend recently mailed to Lehigh Valley shippers.



To Thatch or not to Thatch

LANCASTER — Many people are unaware of what thatch really looks like. Thatch is not the dead grass laying on the ground under the good grass. Thatch is a spongy-like layer which is between the grass plant and the soil surface. This spongy layer called thatch is the accumulation of dead and dying turfgrass plant parts such as roots and stems.

Thatch behaves similarly to a sponge when it is wet for it will hold excessive amounts of water which then reduces the oxygen supply to the roots. When dry it is extremely difficult to rewet. Thatch can restrict the movement of water, air, nutrients, and even pesticides into the soil.

The rate of thatch buildup is dependent on: type and/or variety of grass, over-fertilization (particularly with soluble nitrogen source), overwatering, also intermittent watering where the soil frequently is dry, then very wet, and infrequent high mowings.

Grass clippings from turf removed at the proper height and frequency will not add to the thatch buildup.

A small amount of thatch is beneficial since it helps in maintaining soil moisture, but when thatch is over one-half inch in thickness, its benefits cease to exist and control measures should be considered.

Removing thatch with a thatching machine (which has stationary and not flip flop blades) and reduce thatch. One should note that repeated thatching may be necessary on some lawns. This process can not be done at any time of the year - for best results, thatching (or vertical mowing) should be done only when the grass is actively growing (spring or fall) for this aids the recovery of the turf.



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