

Lancaster Farming

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An Avian experience — the story of one family



This fall's dark ominous clouds have brought much needed heavy rainfall to particularly the parched fields of south-central and southeastern Pennsylvania and have gone a long way toward breaking the back of the summer drought. Both October and November rainfall totals throughout the region have been in the five to six-inch range — a sharp contrast to the scattered sprinkles of July and August. Arriving before frost, the rains have recharged the subsoil moisture levels for the coming year.

ASCS announces details of emergency feed plan

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN
HARRISBURG — Farmers eligible for the low-interest FmHA loans in the Pennsylvania counties declared drought disaster areas will be able to participate in an emergency feed program, but they'll have to foot the cost of transporting lower-grade corn a considerable distance. State ASCS Director Eugene Thompson yesterday announced details of the emergency feed program, which was a part of the new dairy legislation just signed by President Reagan. The farmers who are eligible for the Farmers Home Administration

loans in the disaster counties will be able to buy the lower-grade CCC-owned corn, which includes No. 4, 5 and Sample corn.

Cost of the corn will be about \$2.18 a bushel, which is 75 percent of the county loan rate, plus transportation costs to bring the grain into Pennsylvania.

The locations of the corn include Texas, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Illinois.

The signup period in the ASCS offices in the disaster counties will open on Tuesday, Dec. 6 and close on Wednesday, Dec. 14.

County ASCS personnel will

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BY LAURA ENGLAND
LANCASTER — Earlier this year, Warren and Alicia Miller were among the Lancaster County poultrymen enjoying the successes of their layer and broiler house operations.

The Millers were happy with their own egg production and the industry itself. They rejoiced when the markets were high and fought their way through depressed markets.

But the scenario changed, and on Oct. 21, the couple was fighting a different battle - this one against avian influenza which hit Lancaster and five surrounding counties with a deadly impact.

It was Oct. 21. The Miller's poultry manager Dick Zimmerman had just finished his rounds of the four poultry houses and had found what all county poultrymen have learned to fear. Eighty birds were found dead in house number four.

The Millers, who have been in the poultry business since 1979, lost all of their 260,000 layers. Those

concerns and provide input into state programs which will be set up to help the industry survive the effects of the Avian influenza outbreak. Through an ap-

propriation in the agriculture department's current budget \$216,000 is available for indemnity payments to affected farmers."

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Dairy bill signing brings good reaction

BY TRISH WILLIAMS
LANCASTER — President Reagan late Tuesday compromised his free market philosophy and signed into law the much debated dairy compromise bill. The law became effective December 1, causing the milk support price to drop from \$13.10 to \$12.60, and removing 50 cents from the previous \$1 assessment.

Word of Reagan's concession came at a very opportune time, as officials from dairy cooperatives across the country met for the annual meeting of the National Milk Producers Federation in San Francisco.

Lancaster Farming correspondent, Joyce Bupp, who was attending the NMPF meeting reported, Kika E de la Garza, Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, was addressing the group when he was called from the podium. When he returned he announced that Reagan had just signed the compromise bill into law. He seemed ecstatic, she said. The delegates were excited.

In a telephone conversation with Kathy Gill, spokesperson for Inter-State Milk Producers Cooperative,

also attending the meeting came this report.

"Everyone sighed a breath of relief," Gill said. "Reaction was very positive on the whole. There is a feeling of a very united dairy industry here."

She stressed that the dairy compromise bill developed by the Congress, industry and the Reagan administration, is just that, a compromise. But in that respect is a good piece of legislation.

"It will mean more government intervention in the dairy industry," Gill said on behalf of Inter-State. "We, (the dairy industry) must take this opportunity to get the surplus situation in control so that we are in good shape when it's time to sign the 1985 Farm Bill."

"The monkey is now on the industry's back to take this program and make it work," Gill concluded.

The dairy compromise bill marks the first time that dairy farmers will have the opportunity to receive payment from the government for not producing milk. One of the provisions of the bill establishes a paid diversion

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Huntingdon Countian harvests his first husklage crop

BY LAURA ENGLAND
TYRONE — In 1976, Iowa cattleman Bill Manthe was searching for a cheaper, but comparable, feeding ration for his 100-head beef herd, and realizing a solid feeding program at a minimal cost is a must to stay in the cattle business, he decided to try husklage.

Feeding husklage, a silage-type feed made from corn tailings, to cattle is a practice that several cattleman in western states have picked up on and found profitable. Manthe said in a telephone interview. But will the practice work in Pennsylvania and with dairy heifers? A Huntingdon County dairyman is aiming to find out.

Joe Hicks, Tyrone, first learned about husklage and Manthe's operation, Lake View, Iowa, through an article appearing in a trade magazine last October. A dairyman who milks 100 cows and raises 100 heifers and 30 steers on 400 acres, Hicks saw a potential in feeding the corn tailings to his younger livestock.

After a few phone calls, Hicks was on his way to Iowa to meet Manthe in person, view his operation and get first-hand knowledge in processing and feeding husklage. While the concept of feeding "junk" or opportunity feed is not new, the manner in which Manthe chops the corn crop residue is.

Manthe, himself, has been feeding junk feed since 1964, but in 1976 he began feeding the husklage, which is processed through a machine he designed. The machine, called a crop residue collector, hooks up to the combine and collects the tailings. The tailings pass through the residue collector machine where they are chopped into silage-like material and then spewed into a forage wagon hooked up behind.

The first machine Manthe designed mounted on the combine itself. In 1979, a demand for a pull-type machine called for alterations to the original design. The pull-

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Huntingdon County dairyman Joe Hicks, Tyrone, displays the feeding and cutting unit of his pull-type "crop residue collector" machine.