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Lancaster Farming

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Milk diversion program signups begin



Farm Show weather — snow followed by bitter cold — arrives a week late.

But ASCS withholding figures until enrollment period ends

BY TRISH WILLIAMS
 LANCASTER — Interest in the government's new Milk Diversion Program is running high among dairymen, according to Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service officials,

who are swamped with phone calls and questions on the program.

But it's anybody's guess just how many dairymen have established bases or contracted to participate in the program.

ASCS officials are prohibited from releasing such figures until all contracts have been submitted, Jan. 31st. More than likely a final tally will not become available to the public until Feb. 15th, the last date Secretary of Agriculture John Block has to modify contracts according to participation levels.

Ronald Hunt, a federal ASCS official in Washington, D.C., said, "We have decided not to release any information on participation levels until after Jan. 31st, when all the contracts have been submitted, because we don't want the overall participation level to affect an individual's decision to participate."

At a meeting on the final regulations of the program Tuesday night at the Farm and Home Center in Lancaster, Ray Brubaker, hedged a farmer's question on the level of participation in the county. Brubaker, director of the Lancaster ASCS office said, "more farmers have established bases than signed up for the PIK program." When pressed for an exact figure Brubaker responded, "more than

Surveillance of poultry set to begin

BY LAURA ENGLAND
 LANCASTER — A "poultry watch" or surveillance program was initiated by the Avian Influenza Task Force this week to make earlier detection of infected poultry flocks possible.

According to Wayne Baggott, task force spokesman, the poultry watch program will facilitate early detection of avian flu and will provide information to pinpoint where the disease is.

Until now, task force personnel relied on producers to report suspicious flocks. Through the poultry watch program, task force members hope to sample the 700 poultry premises within the 5,100 square mile quarantine zone on a weekly basis.

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Avian, milk fund getting legislative priority

HARRISBURG — Avian flu and the Milk Security Fund are high on the ag agenda when the Pennsylvania State Legislature goes back into session on Monday.

The Senate-passed bill introduced by Sen. Noah Wenger, of Lancaster and Chester counties, to provide \$1.2 million for aid to poultry farmers affected by Avian is expected to be amended in the

House and the total increased to \$2 million, as requested by the Governor.

Wenger's bill was passed by the Senate but was not acted upon by the House before the holiday recess.

The amount of aid is being hiked to \$2 million because of the ever-expanding scope of the Avian problem.

Funds are to be earmarked for two main purposes. There would be reimbursement to those farmers who suffered flock losses prior to the start of the federal indemnification program. This is estimated to cost about \$200,000.

The bulk of the monies would go toward aiding poultry farmers with the extensive cleanup costs

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PRV hanging on as eradication program continues

Summer is revised target date for statewide disease-free status

EPHRATA — Pseudorabies is still hanging on in Lancaster County swine herds, but the state is continuing efforts to get back to a PRV-free status by next summer.

After an entire summer and most of the autumn free of any new outbreaks, pseudorabies was found in two new herds — one in November and one just about a week ago.

"Up to that time things were looking pretty good and we were making real progress," said Dr. John Cable, of the Swine Division, of the PDA's Bureau of Animal Industry.

"We're still hoping to get it cleared up by next summer

"But if anything is going to happen, this is the time of the year that it does"

Including the two new herds, a total of eight operations are still quarantined — all in the northeastern section of Lancaster County

Of these, five are breeding operations and three are feedlots.

Depopulation — entirely at the owner's expense — is pretty well along in four of the five breeding

operations. PRV was just confirmed about a week ago in the fifth operation

Of the three feedlots, one is about out of pigs and progress is continuing on the other two.

The recent outbreaks in November and about a week ago were the first in quite a few months in the state

Prior to that, it was found in some feeder pigs in June, but may have come in from out of state. In breeding herds, the most recent previous outbreak had been way back in last April.

On August 1, the PDA's Bureau of Animal Industry implemented a mandatory cleanup plan for infected herds in a final effort to eradicate pseudorabies from the state.

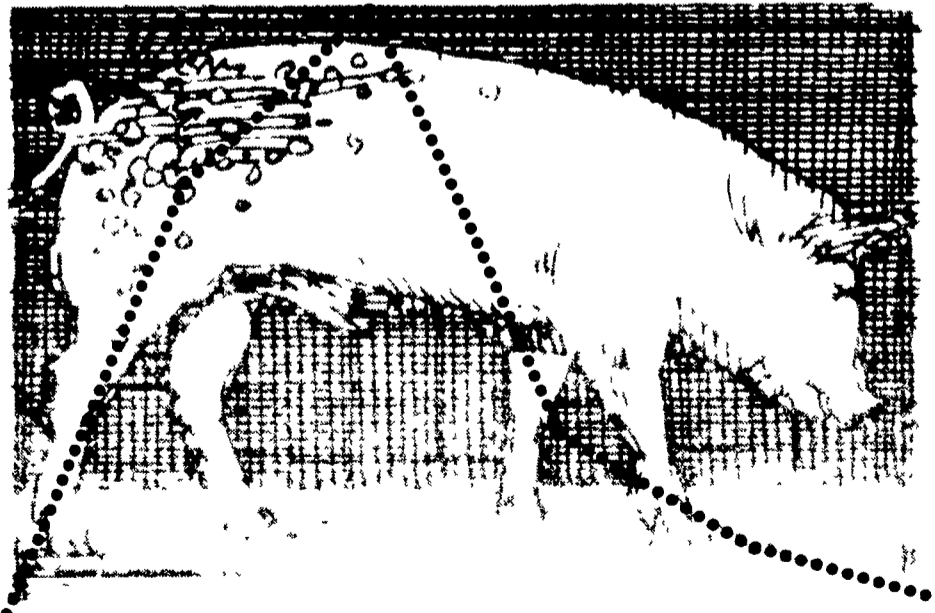
Good progress had been noted in that effort over the summer and fall until the most recent setback with the confirmation of the disease in the two new herds

At the time the cleanup and eradication plan was put into effect, it had been hoped that the state might be free of pseudorabies

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Pseudorabies quarantines

40
30
20
10



Number of new cases

1980 '81 '82 '83 '84

A total of 87 swine premises have been quarantined during the past four years as the state continues its battle to eradicate pseudorabies. During the initial year of the outbreak in 1980, quarantines totaled 28. The number of new quarantines reached a peak of 40 in 1981 — more than half of which came during the PDA's spring 50-square-mile survey. The number of new premises dropped to 12 in 1982, five in 1983 and two thus far this year. Of the 87, eight operations are still under quarantine.