



BUSINESS NEWS...

Brubaker consulting in 5th year

LANCASTER — With the agricultural climate separating the men from the boys in recent years, the question persists: How can the farmer achieve maximum economic return for his efforts? Preoccupied by long hours in the harness, today's diversified farmer seldom has the time to gain the necessary expertise in all facets of his operation.

Enter the consultant whose job it is to take an objective look at farm procedures, and recommend, if possible, a better way. Ideally, this "better way" translates to time and cost savings.

Such are the goals of Michael W. Brubaker. His credentials include a degree of agronomy and work in agribusiness with his father's Lancaster-based Organic Plant Food Company.

Though his company, Brubaker Agronomic Consulting Service, is currently in its fifth year, he explains that the company's roots date back about eight years when his father, William Brubaker, was experimenting with methods to increase crop yields.

Utilizing fields owned by 10 area farmers as his laboratory, Brubaker was able to increase yields significantly, and the idea of making these techniques available to all farmers was born.

Operating under the auspices of Organic Plant Food Co., for the first three years, Brubaker Agronomic became an independent firm two years ago, with Brubaker's wife, Cindy handling the books and agronomist Thomas Becker added last March to help with an increased workload.

A member of the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants, Brubaker Agronomic specializes in soil fertility, using three primary tools for evaluating cropland: soil samples, plant analysis, and manure analysis.

After signing a grower to a one-year contract, the firm scouts all cropland, mapping the farm into field units and taking soil samples for lab analysis. As soon as the soil has been tested, a consultation is arranged.

Topics include herbicide and insecticide recommendations, as well as lime and fertilizer application, and crop rotation.

Early spring marks the first in a series of field visits, that occur about twice a month throughout the growing season. Each visit includes the scouting of all fields for weed and insect problems, as well as a number of specific checks based on the time of year. The year's first visit in March, for example, involves a weed census in small grain and alfalfa fields, as well as an inspection of sprayers to insure proper application.

An early May visit insures that corn is planted at the proper population levels, with plant analysis beginning in mid-June. During July, rootworm counts in corn, and leaf-hopper counts in alfalfa are performed to determine where insecticide application might prove beneficial.

"There has to be enough insect and weed pressure to economically justify control," Brubaker emphasizes, adding that his company operates independently of chemical and fertilizer manufacturers or suppliers.

With September and October



Michael Brubaker

come corn and alfalfa yield checks, followed by more soil tests after the harvest. When all growing season data is compiled it's time for the winter meeting when results are analyzed and recommendations for the coming season are made.

When asked to list some of the specific area problems, Brubaker was quick to point out the widespread excessive application of manure with excessive concentrations of some nutrients and insufficient levels of others. He stressed the role of plant analysis in providing crops with the proper amount of nutrients.

"By adding only enough nutrients to match crop removal," Brubaker said, "we can reduce loss by leaching and runoff, which will go a long way toward solving our pollution problems such as the nitrate problem we have right now in the Chesapeake."

Brubaker stressed the role of his firm's frequent field visits in spotting potential problems, before they get heavily into the farmer's profits.

"Using cutworm as an example, a five to six percent infestation in corn translates into a seven bushel per acre loss daily. Our consulting service will be right there, in your fields to diagnose this type of problem and provide you with instant recommendations."

Brubaker noted that an independent consultant's experience with many farmers gives him the ability to pin-point potential problem areas before a problem develops into a major financial burden.

ABS holds dairy seminar

DE FOREST, Wisc. — American Breeders Service and co-sponsors, Union Carbide, Upjohn, CEVA Laboratories and Bayvet, hosted 50 participants for a "Dairy Reproduction Management Seminar" held recently in Madison, Wisc. The seminar offered agricultural university and extension dairy specialists, plus others in the dairy industry, the opportunity to gain up-to-date material from 22 different industry and ABS speakers.

"Our main purpose for holding the seminar was to promote an open exchange of information and

SYRACUSE, NY — Local dairy farmers have been mailed a dairy planning kit by Agway to assist them in evaluating the pros and cons of participating in the new Federal program designed to reduce the dairy surplus.

"Each dairy farmer must decide whether or not to sign up for the program by Jan 31," says William A. Hiller, Agway president. "We want to help our members make the right financial decision for their individual farming operations. The decision won't be the same for everyone."

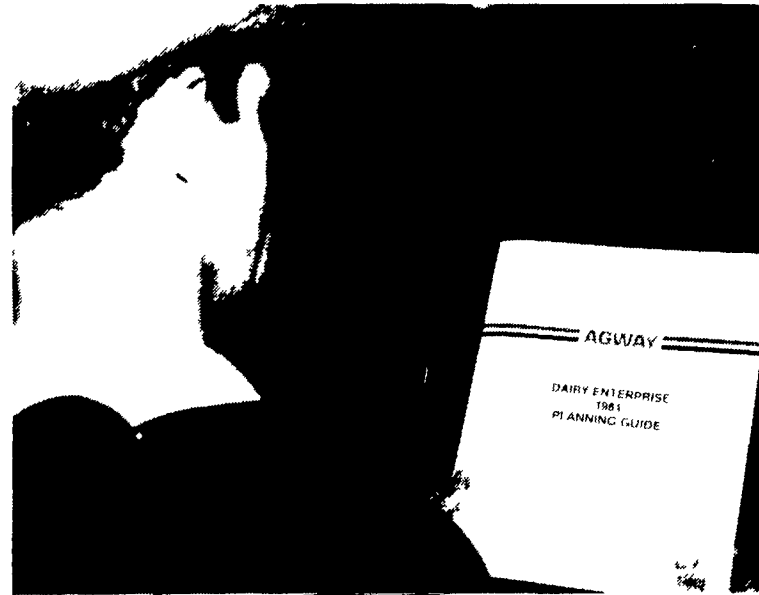
Hiller reports that more than 24,000 dairy farmers in 11 northeastern states served by Agway have received the kit of materials prepared by Agway dairy and feed specialists.

The planning kit contains an explanation of the Dairy Stabilization Act of 1983, a work sheet to help each farmer evaluate the implications of participation in the 15-month program, and several scenarios prepared by Dr. Lew Mix, Agway farm management R&D director.

Also included in the Agway dairy planning kit is a booklet titled "Managing the Dairy Enterprise with Lower Milk Prices." The booklet suggests how farmers can meet specific income goals with fewer cows and fewer acres.

Dr. Kendall L. Dolge, nutrition and quality assurance manager for Agway's Feed Services, points out to dairy farmers the danger of drastic changes in the herd feeding program in mid-winter.

"Nothing hurts feed efficiency more seriously than sudden changes in ration composition. With lower milk prices, many dairymen will be temp-



An Agway member looks over a copy of a dairy planning kit sent by the farm cooperative to dairy farmers to assist them in deciding whether to participate in the new government dairy program designed to reduce milk production.

radically on the amount of feed. This can be disastrous," according to Dolge.

Dr. Dolge suggests that dairy farmers consider the use of two dairy feeds. One of the feeds should be designed for the high-producing cows in early lactation period. It should contain a high nutrient density and regulated protein solubility.

The second feed is designed for lactating cows and heifers and can be more economical. In many cases, there can be a savings of \$20 or more per ton. But Dr. Dolge cautions farmers not to switch abruptly from one feed to another. It can result in sharp drops in milk production which may wipe out

any increase in profits.

The feed experts stress that dairy farmers should work closely with their feed suppliers to insure the most efficient and cost-effective combination of home-grown forages and purchased ingredients. Local Agway enterprise salespersons are trained to discuss specifics of balancing feeding programs for optimum results.

Whether or not a dairy farmer participates in the government dairy program, lower milk prices and relatively high feed costs during the coming months will make it imperative that dairymen operate their farm businesses as efficiently as possible.

IH reports new planters

CHICAGO, Ill. — Two new International 800 Series Cyclo Air Planters are now available in 12- and 16-row horizontal rear-fold designs.

All functions of the new 30-in. (762 mm) row planters for field operation and folding for transport are controlled from the tractor seat. In fact, folding the big planters for transport requires less than 30 seconds and takes less than 20 ft. (6.1 m) of forward travel.

Simple, easy operation of the International Harvester planters is made possible by a tractor-mounted Planter Controller and one auxiliary valve which controls all field functions, as well as folding operations.

A key element of the new horizontal rear-fold design is a hydraulic lift system which elevates planter row units to a vertical position before the wing frames are hydraulically unlatched and pivot rearward. Rotating planter units to the vertical position makes inspection and servicing easier, too, says International Harvester.

The planter row units are positioned vertically during transport to provide exceptionally narrow transport widths of 13 ft. 6 in. (4.1 m) for the 12-row narrow



International 800 Series Cyclo Air Planters come in 12- and 16-row designs.

model and 14 ft. 6 in. (4.4 m) for the 16-row model. In transport position, these planters trail similar to a wagon, providing exceptional stability, maneuverability and ample ground clearance.

Another feature operators will like about the new rear-fold planter is its short hitch, which permits tight headland turns.

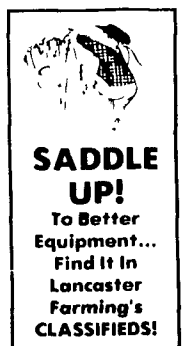
Flexible mainframes and walking beam wing frame wheels allow planting units on both models to follow ground contours and maintain precise depth control. In addition, individual wing frames

can be raised when planting point rows.

These two new horizontal rear-fold planters offer the same performance and productivity features as current 800 Series Cyclo Air Planters with large 15-bu. seed hoppers and up to eight planting speeds. No tools are needed for depth settings, drum changes and pesticide rate adjustment. International Harvester offers a range of options for the new planters, such as pesticide attachments, population monitors, 15 different drums for various crops and row tillage attachments.

information on nitrogen refrigerator service, estrous synchronization, and new embryo technology.

Speakers from USDA, agricultural universities, and A.I. and dairy related industries demonstrated varying viewpoints, particularly touching on updating of the genetic base for sire evaluations, new information on estrous synchronization products, and the linear evaluation of dairy cattle, now a standard in the dairy industry.



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