

Milker school

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how the parts of the milking system must be sized to one another. The capacity of the

vacuum pump depends on the number of milking units, he said. "The vacuum regulator

stabilizes the vacuum level," Shirk said. "It must be sensitive and have the capacity to handle all the air running through the system, therefore it is has to be as big as the vacuum pump. It must also be cleaned regularly to remain sensitive.

"The regulator controls the vacuum at the teat end," Shirk continued. "Fluctuations in the vacuum level at the teat end can cause stress and induce mastitis. Therefore it is important to have a sensitive vacuum regulator. The

servo diaphragm is the most sensitive. The weighted lever regulator is the least sensitive. The only place for the weighted lever regulator is on the junk pile. Your cows' udders are much to valuable to use the weighted lever."

Shirk noted that stray voltage can be a problem that leads to lowered milk production and mastitis. While humans can not feel an electrical charge below six volts, cows are sensitive to as little as half a volt of electricity.

Stray voltage is caused by un-

balanced lines, poor connections, poor grounding and a variety of other factors. Approximately 20 percent of all dairy farms have some degree of stray voltage, Shirk said.

We know more about stray voltage now than we did a few years ago, said Shirk. This allows us to to proper ground new milking systems when they are installed.

The group visited the Delmar Weaver farm in New Holland to study the design and components of a milking system.

Avian hits 400,000 flock

BY LAURA ENGLAND

LANCASTER — Avian influenza, taking its toll on Pennsylvania's poultry industry, again defied the USDA quarantine boundry and claimed a 400,000 layer hen flock in Lebanon County.

Located outside the quarantine zone in northern Lebanon County, the 400,000 bird flock is the largest flock to date diagnosed with the avian virus. Positive diagnosis was confirmed Tuesday on the flock which is north of Fredericksburg.

Eradication of the flock began Wednesday with approximately 80,000 birds depopulated. An additional 80,000 were to be slaughtered Thursday, according to task force spokesman Chuck Williams.

Williams said it is not certain if the entire flock will be depopulated because the deadly disease infected only two of the six houses on the farm. "We're making an effort to contain the disease within those two houses," he said.

Since the eradication program began in November, task force policy has been to kill all the birds located on an infected premise.

In addition to this flock, three others were confirmed with avian

flu this week. This brings the total number of flocks to 271, representing 11.1 million birds. As of Thursday, 268 flocks, representing 10.5 million birds, were depopulated.

Williams said that 107 poultry premises have been approved for cleaning and disinfecting. Of these, 30 have received permits to repopulate their houses.

Interstate Shipping

The Pennsylvania Poultry Federation announced this week that all egg packers shipping eggs to other states must have participated in the poultry watch program for at least two weeks prior to shipping.

This is a new policy which will go into effect March 1, 1984, said Tim Allwein, spokesman for the Federation. "This gives poultrymen adequate time to get their flock on the program if not so already," he said.

By entering the program now, Allwein said poultrymen will avoid interruptions in marketing and in service to out-of-state customers.

Over 1,200 farmers are currently participating in the program which aids in early detection of avian flu. To enroll in the program, please call 717-295-1800.



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