

Md. to hold massive mastitis program

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Extension dairy and veterinary science specialists at the University of Maryland are gearing up for a massive statewide educational campaign which, it is hoped, will involve the largest turnout of Maryland dairy farmers in nearly 60 years.

Concentrating on mastitis control in milk cows, the one-day program will use modern communications equipment like

closed-circuit television and conference telephone hook-ups to reach an estimated 800 dairy farmers gathered at 24 locations.

The program will take place on four consecutive days during the first full week in March. A separate one-day meeting is scheduled March 15 at Salisbury, on Maryland's lower Eastern Shore.

The move-about, multi-media event will kick off the second year

— Phase II — of a three-year project for "Profitable and Efficient Production," which is being sponsored by the University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Service.

Dubbed as PEP, the three-year educational endeavor is intended to help Maryland dairy farmers face an uncertain cost-price future. Nutrition, or proper feeding of dairy cows, received primary emphasis last year at winter

educational meetings for dairy farmers throughout the state.

This year, the emphasis will be on maintaining and improving milk quality — primarily through mastitis control. So the annual meeting of the Maryland Mastitis Council — normally held in March — will not be scheduled this year, for the first time in 19 years.

The mastitis control and milking management format is patterned after a similar program which has

already been successful in Nebraska, according to Dr. Robert R. Peters, an Extension dairy science specialist at the University of Maryland in College Park. The Nebraska undertaking has gained national recognition as a model Extension educational program.

When the Nebraska mastitis meetings were held, about one-third of that state's dairy farms were represented. Peters hopes for one-half of Maryland's dairy farms each sending at least one person to next month's meetings. He notes that 60 percent of Maryland's dairy cows are concentrated in only three counties — Washington, Frederick and Carroll.

Thanks to co-sponsorship by all five of the dairy marketing cooperative organizations operating in Maryland, noon meals for next month's Maryland mastitis meetings will be provided free for co-op patrons. However, there will be a \$5 charge per family or dairy farm for registration expense and a packet of educational leaflets. The deadline for advance registration is March 1.

Promotional brochures containing a registration form are available from 4-H club members or county Extension agricultural agents for \$5. This covers the cost of each educational packet, with \$1 going to the local 4-H club. Persons who register for the meetings without going through a local 4-H club may designate a club to receive the \$1 commission from their registration fee.

Grange names Avian consultant

HARRISBURG — State Grange Master Charles Wismer announces the appointment of Ronald E. Shaffer of Manheim as a consultant to the Grange on poultry issues and the avian influenza problem.

As consultant, Shaffer will represent the State Grange in Lancaster and Lebanon counties, assisting family poultry farmers with poultry-related concerns and helping them to obtain optimum assistance for financial and other problems brought on by the avian flu outbreak. He also will testify for the Grange, as needed, on poultry issues and will continually

advise the Grange staff on legislation relating to poultry farming and avian flu.

Shaffer belongs to Elizabethtown Grange in Lancaster County and will serve on the Grange's Poultry Advisory Committee. His extensive knowledge of the poultry industry was mainly acquired through experience. He grew up on a farm in Lancaster County where he raised turkeys and game birds. In 1976, he became general manager of the Dutch Dozens Farms complex in Lancaster County, where he is now under contract to manage and supply

labor for the 80,000 layer operation.

Shaffer is familiar with the avian flu problem, after surviving two outbreaks in his operation last year. In July he lost between 1500 and 2000 birds to the disease before it was recognized as being of epidemic proportions in the state. Again in November, he lost 10 percent of the flock to the disease and the other 90 percent were depopulated by the federal government.

Since he recovered the poultry operation from the first outbreak, Shaffer has, on his own initiative, been active on the avian flu issue on both the Harrisburg and Washington legislative scenes. He shares the Grange's primary concern for the future of the small family poultry farmer.

"It's the family farmer who is really getting hurt," Shaffer said. "The disease not only is devastating to the poultry, but it

also has emotional effects on the farmer and his family. When you've been depopulated and your chicken houses are empty, it really bothers you."

State Master Charles Wismer said, "I have found Ron to be very aggressive and sincere in his efforts to help poultry farmers through this crisis. His poultry management experience and excellent rapport with farmers will enable him to be a valuable asset to the Grange out in the field."

Wismer said the State Grange offers its assistance to any farmers who have lost birds either directly to the virus or have had birds slaughtered to prevent spread of the disease from September 1 up until the November 9 federal emergency declaration in applying for state financial assistance. Farmers can contact Ron Shaffer at (717) 665-6913, OR the State Grange office at (717) 234-5001

York SCS post filled

YORK — Ann Meyer has been assigned to fill the Soil Conservation Technician position at the York Field Office of the Soil Conservation Service.

Mrs. Meyer will replace Wayne Kile, who retired last fall after serving as Soil Conservation Technician in the York Field Office since 1948.

Mrs. Meyer is a native of Erie. She graduated from Penn State in 1980 and has worked for the Soil

Conservation Service as a Soil Conservation Trainee in York County, as a Soil Conservationist in Cambria County, and as a Soil Conservationist in Baltimore County, Md.

Her prime responsibility will be working with farmers and other landowners in surveying, designing and supervising the construction of soil and water conservation measures in York County.

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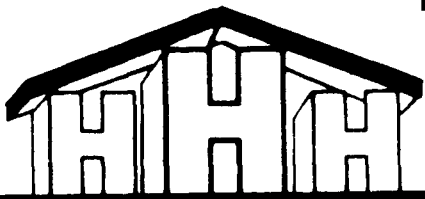
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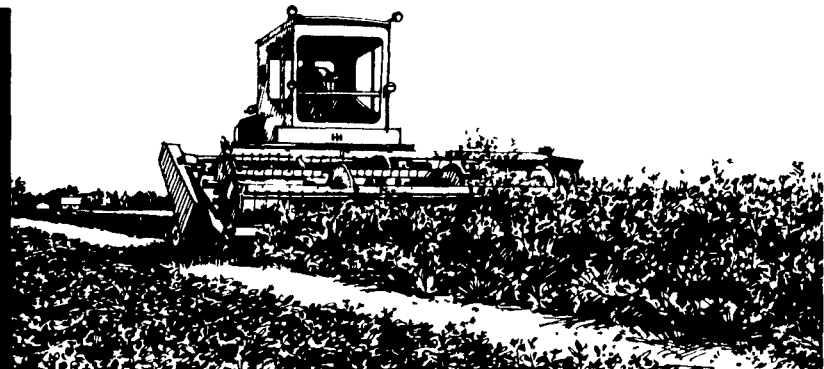
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