

Lancaster Dairy Days

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less the chance of developing clinical characteristics.

Infected cows show signs of weight loss although the appetite remains normal, Dr. Whitlock said, and severe diarrhea is apparent. Cows may also develop mastitis and infertility.

Determining how many cows in the herd are infected with Johne's is not easy. "If one cow has it," Dr. Whitlock said, "eight to 10 others may also be infected but not show clinical signs."

Johne's organisms are passed from one cow to the next through contaminated manure, water and feed. Those animals most susceptible are younger livestock, usually under one year of age, Dr. Whitlock said.

To prevent the spread of Johne's, Dr. Whitlock said calves should be separated from infected dams at birth. It is best to give them colostrum from an uninfected cow, he added.

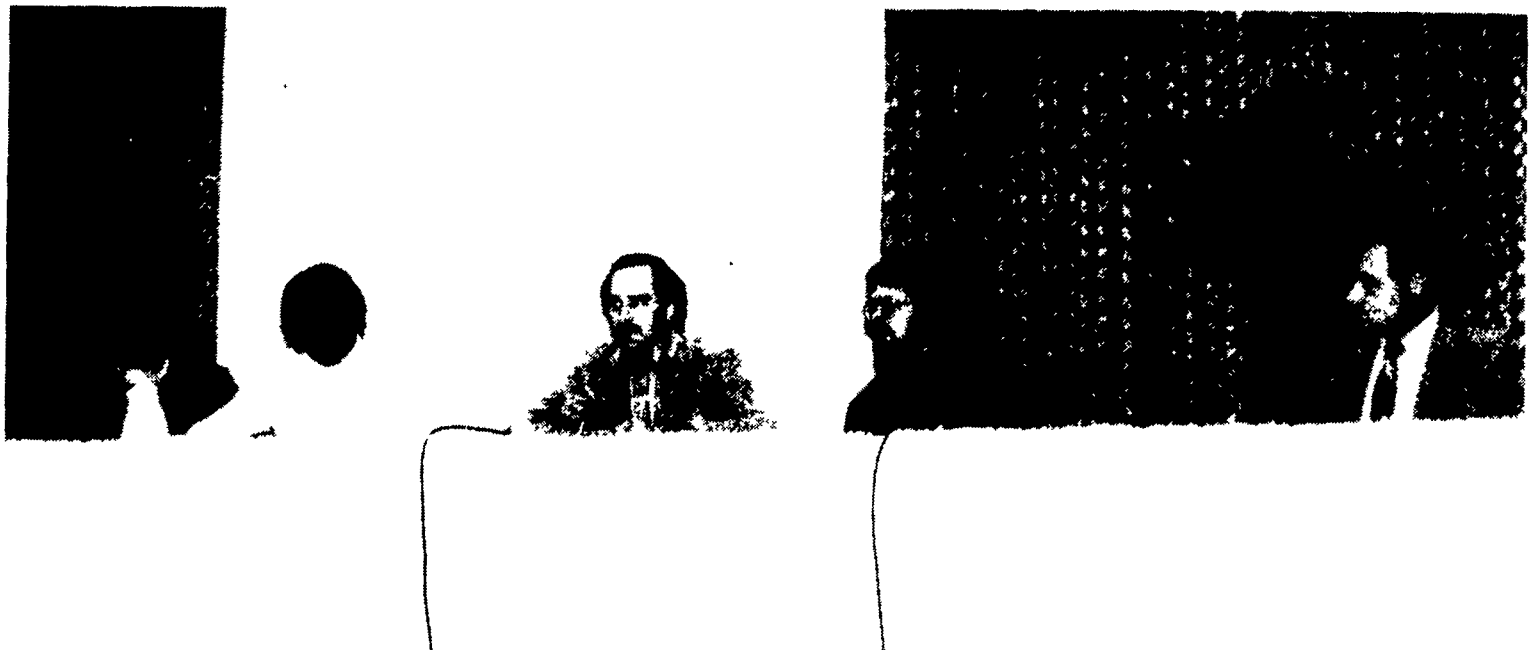
Feed and water should be separated, and Dr. Whitlock cautioned that replacement heifers not be mixed with the adult herd until after one year of age. Also, separate unthrifty cows from the herd: "she's shedding millions of organisms," he said.

Currently, a cooperative research project has been coordinated by Penn State University, the University of Pennsylvania, the state Department of Agriculture and the National Animal and Disease Lab in Ames, Iowa. Through the project, the institutions hope to develop faster and more accurate tests and determine how prevalent the disease is in Pennsylvania.

The Johne's presentation by Dr. Whitlock was one of several topics concerning dairy cattle feeding programs and herd management practices discussed during the two-day event. Each day's program was highlighted by a producer panel.

Under the category of cattle feeds, Penn State Extension agronomist Elwood Hatley provided information on double cropping and alternative crops for a dry year. "The big thing about these is to make your decisions based on your own individual situation and current crop system," he said.

Hatley suggested the use of winter grains such as barley, winter wheat and rye by themselves or in combinations to serve



Answering questions on feeding programs for the dairy herd are, from left, Lancaster County dairymen Robert

Kauffman, Keith Zurin, James Hershey, Joe Garber and Glenn Shirk, moderator.



Darwin Braund, center, goes over his dairy feed and nutrition presentations with Gregory Landis, left, master of ceremonies, and Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension agriculture agent.

as silage and grain feeds. "With all of these," he said, "you're looking at sources you have and how you can use them."

Silage alternatives include soybeans, sorghum or soybean-sorghum mixtures. Brassica crops serve the same purpose. These are not the only crops which can be used, Hatley said, but they are alternatives.

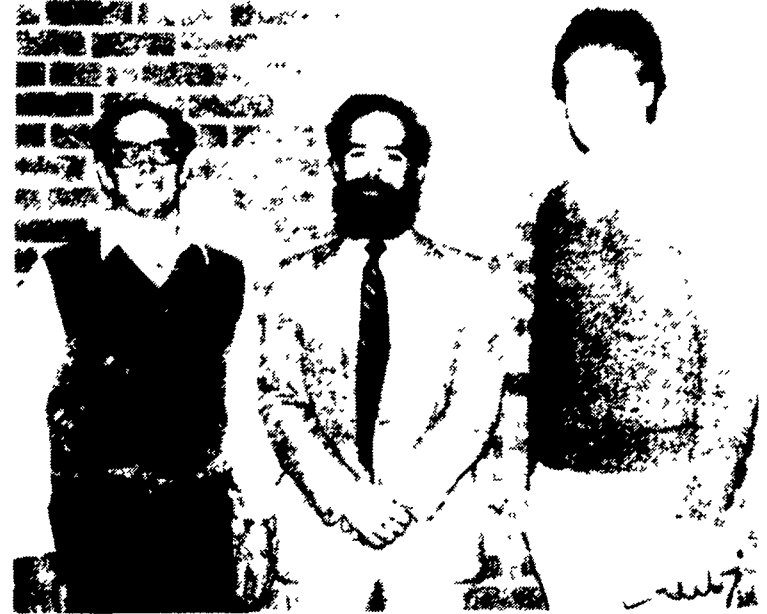
Darwin Braund, director of dairy and livestock research and development with Agway Inc., spoke on using alternative feeds and additives effectively and getting a better return on the feed dollar.

According to Braund, several by-product feeds are on the market today but they should be evaluated before used on the farm. Common by-products include brewer's grain, distiller's grains and liquid

whey. Questioning whether by-product feeds are economical, what the nutrient and dry matter content is, and will the cow eat the feed are important steps before buying.

With the passing of the milk diversion program, Braund told the dairymen that "you better go home to see if you can profitably produce milk at \$2 lower than you are now." Dairymen need to plan a feeding strategy and see if they are getting the best return for their feed dollars, he said.

Braund also provided tips on managing cows in hot weather, while Dr. Terry Blanchard, assistant professor of large animal reproduction at New Bolton Center, spoke on summer sterility problems and Stephen Spencer, Penn State Extension dairy specialist reviewed summer



Producer panel members, from left, Donald Trimble, Gary Akers and D. Lamar Witmer, are dairymen who have recorded somatic cell counts of 100,000 or less. They shared their management tips with dairymen during Lancaster County Dairy Days.

mastitis problems. Robert Eberhart, Penn State professor of veterinary science, explained the nature and causes of high somatic cell counts.

Two producer panels were held during Lancaster Dairy Days, one each on Monday and Tuesday. Participating in Monday's panel, "How I Feed Cows for Profit," were Joe Garber, Willow Street, James Hershey, Elizabethtown, Robert Kauffman, Peach Bottom, and Keith Zurin, Mount Joy.

Tuesday's panel members were Gary Akers, Quarryville, Donald Trimble, Peach Bottom, and D. Lamar Witmer, Manheim. These dairymen, who all received somatic cell counts of 100,000 or less, shared their management practices on keeping cell counts down.

In addition to the speakers, commercial exhibitors were on hand to share the latest in dairy farm feed, equipment and housing.

York Holstein breeders hear dry cow tips

BY JOYCE BUPP

Staff Correspondent

YORK — The last thing any dry cow needs is a soggy wet, bacteria-laden pen somewhere out behind the dairy barn, with a steady diet of weed-stem hay and several scoops daily of fattening concentrates.

To further "mess up" a dry cow, try drying up her production by tapering off, or milking out every few days, and then finally turn her out without bothering to give any type of dry treatment.

Those are surefire methods of almost guaranteeing a steady flow of problem fresheners and meat-auction cows, according to a dry cow management presentation heard Tuesday by York Holstein breeders.

In the setting of a brand new dry cow and maternity facility on the Smyser family farm, East Berlin Road, Penn State dairy specialist Dick Adams gave a thorough rundown on the do's and don'ts of caring for the dairy cow in her "rest" period.

"Periodic milking out of the

udder while drying off a cow only prolongs the agony," admonishes Adams, who advocates picking a day to stop milking the cow and then not milking her again. He stressed, however, that extreme care must be taken in watching the udder for "blowouts" or inflammation flare-ups, then treating immediately and thoroughly if necessary.

Cows in their dry period need adequate levels of both protein and calcium, without overfeeding either nutrient. Too little of either will result in the cow's drawing the needed nutrient from her own body supplies, eventually weakening her system which should be gearing up for the calving and production stresses ahead. A three to five pound grain feeding per day will help maintain proper acidic levels in the rumen to utilize the minerals in forages and sustain healthy levels of digestive microflora.

Selenium and Vitamin E are important trace elements since deficiencies of these can leave the animal susceptible to infections,

and unable to produce protective antibodies.

In fact, Adams says the dry cow requires two to three times the normal selenium levels necessary in the system of a milking animal, and can become selenium deficient

in as brief a period as three weeks if the needed level is not maintained in her body.

Two other vital elements are salt and Vitamin A. Salt needs can be met with about 1.5 pounds per hundred weight of feed Up to

30,000 units of supplemental Vitamin A, or one million units injectable, may be needed in the cow's system over the duration of the dry period.

Neither salt nor minerals should

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Rodney Smyser, center, a partner in the Richlawn dairy operation, explains some of the features of the individual cow care pens to York Holstein Club visitors.