

Johne's

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Transmission of Johne's occurs primarily through the ingestion of manure from infected animals. The key is to remove infected animals from the herd, and keep manure away from the calves, the most susceptible animals.

What this means for dairymen is management changes. Dr. Sharon

Harmon from the Animal Disease Laboratory at Penn State, another member of the Johnes' research team, has drawn up some management guidelines for controlling the spread of the disease.

Washing the dam's udder prior to calving and providing a separate calving area for each calf

is a first step. Removing the calf from the cow immediately after calving and washing the cow's udder again before drawing the colostrum is another. And colostrum should not be pooled because that allows one contaminated sample to infect all the calves.

Separate housing for calves is especially important. Calves must be kept away from the manure of adult animals, whether it's along fences, on the boots of the dairyman, or in the bedding. That's how the paratuberculosis

organism is transmitted.

Calves should be pastured in areas uncontaminated from the manure of adults. And contamination of feed and water should be avoided as well by using separate waterers for calves and adults.

All those suggestions are steps to protect calves from exposure to infected manure, but the other important step in eliminating Johne's is to cull infected adults.

The guidelines and management suggestions for handling Johne's are quite detailed. If you've had

Johne's diagnosed in your herd, or suspect you have carriers, you should be working with your veterinarian.

You must take whatever appropriate steps you can now. In March or April when the researchers have some answers from their three-year project to the plaguing questions about the economic consequences of Johne's, they will be anxious to share their results with dairymen. As Dr. Whitlock said, this is all being undertaken for the benefit of the dairy industry.

Bill priority set by Grange

HARRISBURG — State Grange Master Charles Wismer announced the Grange's legislative priorities in the lame duck session of the State Legislature from Nov. 19 to November 30.

Topping the list, Wismer said, is a bill requiring poultry and egg producers to be paid for live poultry and eggs within 21 days of delivery to the buyer or processor. H.B. 2035, introduced by Rep. John Broujos (D-Adams) earlier in the year, must be approved by the Senate Agriculture Committee as well as the full Senate before the session ends.

Under the bill, a farmer could add interest onto the late payment after 21 days and put a first priority lien on any company-owned birds still in his possession. (Contract poultry farmers raise the chicks to maturity for a fee, but the birds are actually owned by the processor.) Under the legislation, farmers can sell the birds after meeting certain stipulations in the bill.

The poultry bill has been a priority project for the Grange. The rural farm organization has

been fighting for poultry growers who contracted with the bankrupt Mandata Poultry plant in Northumberland, Pa. About 90 contract poultry growers never received up to 16 weeks in payment after the company declared bankruptcy last year. Farmers also have to bear housing, feed and utility costs to raise the chicks and depend on their pay checks to cover these expenses.

Other priority legislation sought by the Grange includes a bill prohibiting foreign investors in agriculture from obtaining low-interest Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) loans to compete with our state's agricultural industry, and a bill

providing protection to rural landowners who lease property for oil and gas drilling. The foreign investment bill, a house bill, is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee and has a good chance at passage, according to Wismer. The oil and gas bill, S.B. 402, is in a House-Senate conference committee where the Grange will push for the committee to retain a section requiring a well operator to restore any water supply that may be diminished or contaminated.

The strongest opponent of all of these bills is the clock, Wismer said, as legislators are faced with many bills and only an estimated six days in which to act.



SHORT NOTICE- MACHINERY SALE

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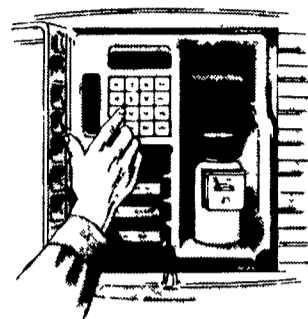
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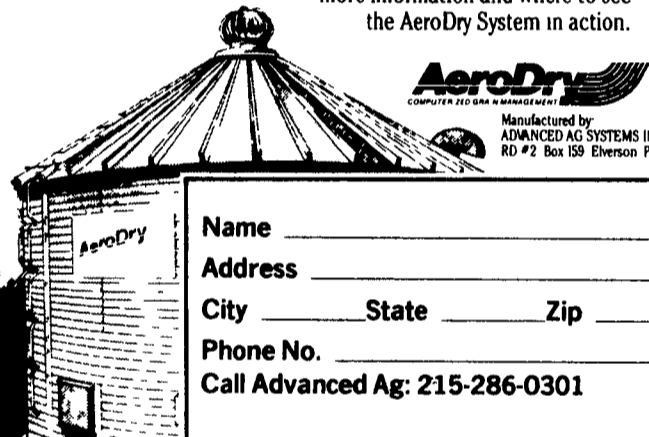
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