

Pork Congress

(Continued from Page A1)

during the day simply because they were more active during daylight hours, Dr. Curtis reversed the procedure so that the lamps burned constantly and were turned off by depressing the switch. He found that his subjects adapted easily to this procedure and increased their paddle pushing at night in order to maintain the cooler 60-degree temperature.

Most important of all was the fact that these educated pigs averaged a 53-percent fuel cost savings over those housed in conventionally heated areas.

"On one farm we've studied, the savings actually ranged to 60 percent," notes Curtis, adding that on-farm research is continuing at two Illinois locations.

Applicable at the nursery and early growing stages, this technique may prove to be beneficial from a humane standpoint as well.

"We think we're being kind to the pig by fully controlling its environment," Dr. Curtis said, "but we might actually be stressing it."

In an effort to find out what other "hobbies" might interest pigs, the animal behaviorist is also experimenting with toys. Though placing a ball in the pig pen to alleviate boredom and reduce fighting has met with some success, Dr. Curtis notes that pigs are more likely to turn their attention to suspended toys that remain manure-free.

So far Illinois studies indicate a preference for cloth strips over chains and hoses. Future research will deal with the effects of such diversions on behavior, health, growth and feed efficiency.

"I still feel that the animal whose needs are best met is going to be the most profitable," said Dr. Curtis, adding that in years to come behavioral studies such as this project will be as widely accepted as nutritional studies are now.

Briefing Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council members on the National Council's activities was NPPC assistant vice president Russ Sanders. Noting that the pork industry is, "in a state of upheaval" Sanders pointed out that Canadian as well as European pork exports are teaming up to rob U.S. producers of profits.

Sanders stated that hog farmers typically spend 99 percent of their effort producing pork and only one percent in sales and promotion. The NPPC, whose 110,000 members produce about three-fourths of the nation's pork, is well equipped to make a significant impact in the promotion area, he said.

Citing the Council's new three-tenths of one percent checkoff schedule going into effect July 1, Sanders said that the new system would be more responsive to market conditions than the current 20 cents-per-head checkoff.

"When hog prices are higher, the checkoff is steeper, but when prices are down, the checkoff is also lower," Sanders pointed out. "This takes into consideration the producers' ability to pay."

The totally volunteer program boasts a 57-percent participation rate nationwide, with 62 percent of the Pa. producers taking part.

Like Sanders, Penn State economist Louis Moore called attention to the Canadian export situation, pointing out that more Canadian hogs entered the U.S. during the first three weeks of January than in the entire year of 1978.

Moore predicts that both pork and beef supplies will decline about four percent in 1985. "I don't think we'll have any trouble seeing \$55 or \$60 hogs this year," he said.

In light of the difficulties experienced in the livestock industry

in recent years, Dr. James VanHorn, professor of family sociology, advised farmers on how to cope with stress.

"It's not the situation that causes stress, but our reaction to that situation that causes stress," he observed. VanHorn stated that physicians estimate that 60 to 75 percent of all diseases are directly stress related.

"One way to cope with stress is to go out of oneself and help someone else," he said. Other recommendations include taking pride in accomplishments, getting sufficient sleep and "talking it out" with a spouse or friend.

Following morning and afternoon presentations and visits

with swine industry representatives, producers attended the Congress Banquet featuring well-known pork industry spokesman and producer, Rolland "Pig" Paul.

Also highlighting the evening event was the recognition of this year's Pork All-American, David A. Reinecker of York Springs. A 1977 graduate of Western Maryland College, Reinecker finishes 800 to 1,000 hogs.

The Reinecker swine operation is a family enterprise, with David's father Ray providing the crops and grain, and his Uncle Stan supplying more than one-half of David's feeder pigs.

A current director of the Southcentral Pork Producers

Council, Reinecker is a newly elected director of the Pa. Council and also serves as one of three state delegates to the NPPC.

Reinecker and his wife Cheryl have two children, Jonathan and Andrew.

Young swine producers were also honored through the PPPC's 4-H and FFA Swine Production Awards.

Recipient of this year's 4-H award is Kathryn Bishop, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bishop of Homer City. The Indiana County 4-H'er is vice president, treasurer and news reporter for her local chapter.

Rodney E. Herr of Gettysburg, took top honors in the FFA division. The son of Erma Herr,

Rodney is a member of the Conewago-New Oxford FFA Chapter, and runs his own farrow-to-finish operation with 32 sows.

PPPC director Abe Fisher also took time to present a pigskin blazer to retiring Penn State professor Grant Sherritt, in honor of his longstanding involvement in the state's pork industry.

The afternoon sessions included a PPPC business meeting where new officers were elected. This year's officers will be: Stephen R. Burkholder, president; David A. Reinecker, vice president; Herb Schick, secretary-treasurer; and C. Eugene Wingert, national director.



Recipients of the PPPC's Swine Production Awards are Kathryn Bishop, Homer City, in the 4-H division, and Rodney E. Herr, Gettysburg, in the FFA division.



Once again H. Louis Moore managed to make a pig of himself at Pork Congress. Congress chairman Les Burdette thinks the economist could use a bit more finish.



Newly elected PPPC officers are (left) David A. Reinecker, vice president; Stephen R. Burkholder, president; Herb Schick, secretary-treasurer; C. Eugene Wingert, national director.



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