

Dairy promotion is Pa. Dairy Princess Lynette Loper's "special mission"

LANCASTER — Let's see. An afternoon of TV tapings and interviews on Monday. Then there's the special presentation with Philadelphia 76er's Bobby Jones next month. And, oh yes, who could forget about lunch with actor Vincent Price at Sardis in New York on Tuesday?

The monthly agenda of a young, aspiring actress or model? Not exactly, but how about the appointment schedule of a young woman with high aspirations for a special assignment?

The above list is just a sampling of the many engagements attended by 18-year-old Lynette Loper of Erie County. Her special assignment—to promote milk across the state as the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess.

Lynette's special assignment began last September when she

was crowned the state princess over 39 contestants. Ever since she was old enough to know what farming was about, she had dreamed of becoming a dairy princess. But the state dairy princess?

"I was the most surprised person there," Lynette said of her crowning. She had gone to the pageant with plans to have a good time and to give the title her best shot—and it worked.

Self-confident and mature beyond her years, Lynette contributes "my being myself and pleasant to the judges" in helping her capture the state crown and banner. Plus, she said, "I always try to do my best."

Intelligence and knowledge of the dairy industry also played a key role in winning the state title. Lynette listed these two attributes

in answering the question, "What is your most valuable asset?" which was asked by the judges.

A daughter of William and Bonnie Loper, Waterford, Lynette's knowledge of the industry was fostered by active participation on the family's 376-acre dairy farm. She has helped in feeding young stock, baling hay and managing the family's cabbage enterprise.

By working with her family, Lynette has developed a deep appreciation and strong belief in the dairy industry. This is the message she wants to convey to her audiences.

"I knew how hard my father worked on the farm," she said, "and I know how important our dairy products are."

With these strong beliefs, Lynette is ready to take her message throughout Pennsylvania. She begins by carefully preparing material to suit the age group. A different topic is prepared for each audience, whether grade school children, teen-agers or adults.

For example, when talking to grade school students, Lynette dresses up as "Professor Garfield" and lectures on how "milk gets from the farm to you." To teen-agers and young adults, she urges, "don't be embarrassed to drink milk." Adult audiences are told about milk's benefits and current health issues concerning dairy products.

Through her travels and meetings with consumers, Lynette has shared her knowledge on osteoporosis, the "brittle bone" disease. "About 99 percent of the questions I'm asked are about osteoporosis," she said.

To answer such questions in her role as ambassador for the dairy industry, the high school senior said it is important to be knowledgeable, have good speaking abilities and to "always be ready to speak up for milk and dairy farming."

"Dairy farmers are very important," Lynette said. "People need to understand this and ask the question, 'Where would we be without farmers and no milk?'"

A sparkle of enthusiasm in her eyes, Lynette said, "I love to tell people how I feel about the dairy industry. It's an important part of Pennsylvania."

And an important part of the Pennsylvania dairy scene, she said is milk and dairy promotion, which



One of the benefits of being a dairy princess is getting gifts. Lynette received a beautiful engraved pitcher at the annual Pa. Dairymen's Association banquet in January.



During opening presentations at this year's Farm Show, Lynette asked Gov. Thornburgh to drink a toast to the state's dairy industry. In her role as dairy princess, Lynette is often in the public eye, bringing milk to the attention of consumers.



Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Lynette Loper accepts her role in promoting milk and dairy products with enthusiasm. Lynette works closely with program director Jan Harding, left.

has recently experienced a great turnaround.

"We (dairy farmers) are getting our advertising dollars up," she said, referring to the mandatory national dairy promotion program. "We're trying to let others know about the dairy industry."

Self promotion is essential to the dairy industry, Lynette said. "Farmers must promote their own products. They must witness for their own products and can do so by ordering milk and other dairy foods in restaurants."

Lynette believes that one person can make a difference where dairy promotion is concerned. A greater advantage is possible, she said, if farmers join together in a unified effort to promote milk.

To make a difference is what Lynette hopes to do as the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess. "I am willing to witness for the dairy industry," she said. "I have a lot of confidence in the industry I love."

In her highly-regarded role, Lynette speaks out on the goodness of milk and dairy products and the role they play in maintaining good health. With plans to pursue a career in nursing, Lynette is health conscious and says, "If I could prevent anything harmful from happening, I would."

It is with this sincere attitude, love for her industry and the best interest of others at heart that Lynette carries her message throughout Pennsylvania.



Lynette came to the state dairy princess pageant representing Erie County and left with the job of promoting the dairy industry across the entire state. Here Lynette is the center of attention shortly after receiving her crown.



JUNE DAIRY MONTH