

Lebanon County hosts PDAC judging school

BY SUZANNE KEENE

LEBANON — Dairy cattle judges from across the state met in Lebanon County this week to hone their skills in preparation for the coming show season. The annual judging school, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Dairy Cattle Association, was held Thursday and Friday at the Lebanon Fairgrounds.

Approximately 68 men and women tested their judging ability on Lebanon County dairy cattle and compared their ratings against those of official judge Bill Etgin from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Etgin has judged dairy cattle for 35 years and is co-author of a book on dairy judging.

Candidates who place in the top quarter of the class for three years earn a place on the PDCA's approved dairy judges list, which is distributed to fair and show organizers.

Participants are selected by the individual breed associations and are invited to attend the school. Many of the participants are already on the approved list, Lebanon County Extension agent

Ken Winebark said, and come for an update and to sharpen their judging skills.

While judges are not required to return to the school once they earn a place on the list, they are encouraged to come back every three years or so, Winebark continued.

Younger students are also encouraged to attend the school to get more experience, said Paul Anderson, a dairy specialist from Penn State University who helped coordinate the school. Both Penn State University and Delaware Valley College had dairy judging teams participating this year.

Throughout the two days, the judges placed classes of Holsteins, Brown Swiss, Ayrshires and Guernseys, all belonging to Lebanon County farmers. For some classes the judges traveled to Lebanon County dairy farms.

On Thursday they judged Holsteins at the fairgrounds, then traveled to the Gary Mase farm, Lebanon, to judge Brown Swiss. On Friday, they went to the Dale Maulfair farm in Jonestown for Ayrshire classes and to the Robert Smith and Sons farm in Annville for Guernseys.

Etgin said he was pleased with the quality of the cattle and noted that top cattle make the judges' task more challenging. "The better the cattle, the better the workout," he said.

Following each class one of the students was called into the show

ring to appraise the individual cows. Another student was then asked to share his placings. Time was also allotted for discussion and questions.

Local 4-H'ers and FFA'ers were on hand to fit the cows for the ring, and the dairymen who donated

their cows for the day also showed them.

Some Lebanon dairymen opened their homes to out-of-town students, giving them "a chance to look at a different operation and share some things," Winebark said.



Bill Etgin, official judge for the dairy cattle judging school held in Lebanon this week, explains his placings in this Holstein class.

Anstutz to speak at Md.

Angus Field Day

WOODSBORO — Dr. Amstutz, a professor of large animal medicine and surgery at Purdue University, will address about 250 Angus breeders at the Maryland State Angus Field Day July 28.

Amstutz will present a slide presentation on cattle leg conditions at 11 a.m. during the Field Day, which will be held at Mar Lee Farm in Woodsboro. After lunch he will give a foot trimming demonstration.

Other highlights of the day include a herd walk and the debut of Mar Lee Broadway, a tour of the embryo transfer center and a preview of Mar Lee sale cattle for the Sept. 8 sale.

Registration for this event begins at 9 a.m. and will be followed by queen and princess presentations. Also giving presentations in the morning will be Bill Powell, regional director of the American Angus Association; Tom Burke, Angus Hall of Fame; Dr. Lee Miller; and Terry Welsh, Soil Conservation Service.

Fred Frey of Quarryville, Pa., will serve kettle fried steak, potatoes and mushrooms for lunch. An art auction for the Herman Purdy scholarship fund and a weight guessing contest for the first semen from Mar Lee Broadway will take place during the lunch hour.

Grange cautions against Farm Bill 'extremes'

WASHINGTON — The chief spokesman for one of the country's major farm organizations warned today that there are two extreme proposals pending before Congress which if either were written into the new farm bill would have a devastating effect on the infrastructure of rural America.

Edward Andersen, Master of the National Grange, said the first proposal is market-oriented toward a free market with decreasing support prices and a phase-out of income supports. The second offers strict mandatory production and marketing control with high support prices and no income supports. Andersen said both plans will weaken the infrastructure of rural communities. The first by the loss of family farms that support rural communities and the second by reducing agriculture production to only the domestic market, requiring a smaller agricultural support system and in shrinking of the rural communities economic base.

Andersen said, "A middle ground must be found that will improve farm income, not interfere with exports, maintain the family farm structure and not destroy the federal budget." He said the Grange, in testimony before the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, has

recommended the new farm bill be built around voluntary supply controls with economic incentives sufficient to encourage large producers to participate in the program. He said by targeting program benefits to medium-sized commercial family farms, the budget impact can be reduced and federal financial assistance would be directed at keeping a maximum number of families in agriculture production.

"It is no secret that agriculture is in a depression similar to the 1930's," said Andersen, "and we are greatly concerned about the socio-economic effect this financial crisis is having on our rural communities." Andersen said it is Grange's opinion that U.S. legislators and the Administration are ignoring the present day short-term problems. "Today's financial crisis must take precedence over any ideological goals of a more market-oriented agriculture policy," said Andersen. "We also cannot let the 1985 Farm Bill be entirely budget driven or dominated by those who believe that the solution lies totally in increasing exports," he said.

Andersen said, "We must remember that the economic and social well-being of our rural communities depends on profitable commercial-size family farms."

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For more information call Farm Bureau 215-723-4355