

# Lancaster Holstein Field Day



A judging contest highlighted events at the Lancaster County Holstein Field Day, held Thursday at the farm of Nelson Wenger, Manheim.

Contestants judged heifers, three-year-olds, and aged cows, while Atlantic's Dale Olver served as official judge. First-place winners were (from left): Dorothy Ranck, women; Tom Wiker, youth; and Clifford Gibble, men.

Other activities at the field day included a buffet lunch and brief reports from Lancaster county agent Glenn Shirk, dairy princess Janae Martin, and state director Mowery Frey.

## USDA perfecting vaccine for bluetongue in sheep

WASHINGTON — U S Department of Agriculture researchers have had 100 percent success in tests of two experimental vaccines to protect sheep against costly bluetongue disease, a USDA scientist said.

Charles H. Campbell of USDA's Agricultural Research Service said the vaccines immunized 12 sheep against two of the five bluetongue viruses that are in this country and cost farmers millions of dollars a year. Worldwide, there are 24 types of the virus that strike cattle as well as sheep.

Campbell, a microbiologist, did the vaccine research at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center off Long Island, N.Y., and veterinarian T Lynwood Barber undertook the testing at the agency's Arthropod-borne Animal Diseases Laboratory, Denver, Colo.

Their research could fill the void for safe vaccines against bluetongue in sheep, according to Daryl D. King, the research agency's national program director for animal health. A live virus vaccine for one of the

viruses, type 10, is approved for sheep, King said, but "live vaccine viruses may revert to a virulent form or cause birth defects if given to pregnant animals."

The new vaccines are safe because they rely on killed viruses, Campbell said. Gamma radiation was used for the first time, he said, to kill bluetongue viruses needed to produce the vaccines.

Gamma radiation destroys the interior genes of the virus without harming its protein coat that, in effect, alerts an animal to the bluetongue invading its body. An animal recognizes the coat as a foreign agent and forms antibodies to fight the virus.

Campbell said further tests will be made to confirm the initial success in sheep. Vaccines could be available in five or six years, he said, pending the outcome of the testing and federal approval.

Bluetongue is spread by flying gnats that bite cattle, the main carriers of the virus, and then attack sheep. Infected sheep can die or suffer mouth sores, lameness, abortions and birth defects, while cattle can recover but still carry the virus without showing any signs of the disease.

No vaccine is available, Campbell said, to protect cattle against the disease, which is found in most parts of the country. It occurs primarily in southern and western states.

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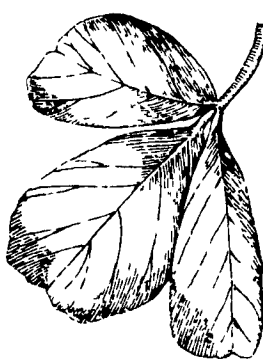
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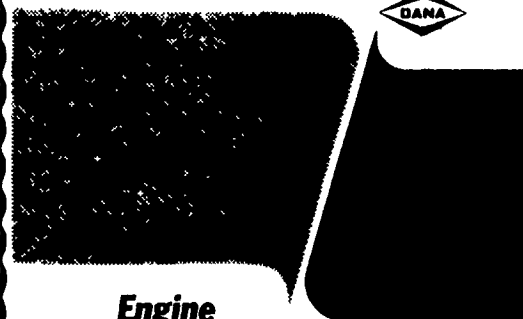
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