



The Dairy Business

By
Newton Bair

Lock The Door — The Horse Is Stolen

The history of the world is dominated by hindsight. It's just about as smart to lock the empty stable door as it is to point our finger backward to any action that brought sorrow or disaster.

As Omar Khay'yam said, "The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on,— and all our wisdom and our wit,— cannot erase a word of it—". The past is indelibly written and can't be erased, but we still like to lock doors on empty stables, and play the game of "what if—", with our yesterdays.

If only we could go back to the mid 1970's and re-play some of the political games that looked so good then. We were implored to feed a starving world, and we tried, God knows we tried. And we almost succeeded, except that the economics of the whole process has blown up in our face. The grain bins are bursting, the milk tank overfloweth, and the sherriff is pounding on the door. More production has not relieved or solved world famine, but it sure has placed farmers in an odd position. The whole world needs

and wants our plentiful supply of dairy products, but no one wants to pay the cost to produce it.

Meanwhile, the games continue in Harrisburg and Washington, with a dubious and arguable outcome. Will the re-plays be able to change the outcome? Hardly, but we can hope that they won't repeat the same mistakes that brought on the present fiasco.

Supporting the price of milk at high levels will only encourage more production. Lowering them may have the same effect, since producers will work harder to increase production in order to maintain cash flow. *A guaranteed market for all we can produce will never cure the problem of too much milk.*

HOW WILL YOU REACT TO NEW LEGISLATION?

While we watch the players in Congress battle to Save Agriculture from the Threatening Doom, we had better think about the way we plan to react to the new legislation. If Congress decides to support the price of milk at \$11.60 with unlimited expansion, will you

continue to expand? Can you afford to expand at that price? If you, and a thousand of your fellow dairymen all expand production, will the support price be dropped even further? (The Senate Dairy bill proposes to reduce the support by 50 cents per hundred when CCC purchases exceed five billion pounds, and even more for each additional increase in production).

The alternative being considered in Washington is the Whole Herd Buy-out. This plan would remove 600,000 cows plus calves and heifers from the national herd. They dare not be only the culls, because the remaining cows will be fed and managed better, breeding will continue to improve, and new techniques like isoacids and growth hormones will cause another surge in milk production. The incentives to sell the whole herd for beef will have to be pretty attractive. How will you react to this one? Would a herd sell-out solve your fiscal problems? It might, if the subsidized incentives are attractive enough.

You can bet your bottom dollar that any new legislation passed this winter will be aimed at *reducing* milk production. And Congress is looking for a long range plan to accomplish it. But the only way that can ever work is if you and every other dairy farmer resolves to make it work.

How you react to the economy of the times and the alternatives set by legislation, will determine the outcome of the present dilemma of Too Much milk for Too Little Money. Sooner or later, some of us will have to let go of the bull's tail. Some will sell out, some will wait until the bank forecloses, and some will simply cut back into a safer position. Some who always have been conservative will continue to operate conservatively and survive. Will you be a survivor, or will you be one of the ones who ducks over the fence to safety?

Extension group honors Winebark

LEBANON — Kenneth L. Winebark, Agriculture Extension Agent in the Lebanon County Office of the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service has been recognized for outstanding achievement as a new worker. The Alpha Omicron Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, national honorary Extension fraternity, annually awards the "Rookie of the Year" honor to an Extension Agent in Pennsylvania who has demonstrated outstanding program efforts and accomplishments during the first two years of employment.

Citing activities and accomplishments since he began working in Lebanon County in June of 1984, Alletta Schadler, Lebanon County Extension Director nominated Winebark.

"His interest, enthusiasm, tireless work and expertise have caused him to be accepted as a leader among his peers and within the agriculture community much earlier than one might expect," she said. "He has sought and received support and assistance from volunteer advisory committees, business and financial leaders, 4-H leaders and teens to plan, develop and implement Extension programs that meet the needs of the County."

Working closely with 4-H Livestock and Dairy leaders, he has helped increase participation of 4-H members in educational activities such as judging workshops, fitting and showmanship and breeding projects. He organized the state Yorkshire/Duroc 4-H and FFA livestock contest in Lebanon

County for more than 100 youth.

Winebark also organized the Pennsylvania Dairy Cattle Association Judging School held for more than 100 adults from across the state. A local advisory and planning committee helped select and prepare animals, host participants, provide publicity and food service.

Manure and Nutrient Management test plots were established to demonstrate the importance of nutrient management on crop production. Winebark uses computer analysis to assist farmers in decision making for nutrient management.

He has also provided farmers with information and assistance in making decisions to improve profitability of livestock and dairy farming.

Winebark serves as advisor to the Board of Directors of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association in Lebanon County, works with Extension Agents in Dauphin, Schuylkill, Berks and Chester Counties to provide programs in dairy and livestock for County farmers.

Lebanon County farm families have been quick to appreciate Ken's interest in youth and his enthusiasm for agriculture according to Schadler. "Ken Winebark is a valued member of the Extension team, an outstanding Extension worker in the best tradition."

A native of Indiana County, Winebark received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from Penn State. He lives in the Myerstown area with his wife Janet and daughter Janine.

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