

## 'PENpages' computer net to debut at Farm Show

UNIVERSITY PARK — Governor Dick Thornburgh will electronically cut the ribbon on the Pennsylvania Extension Network's PENpages, a data base of current information, on the opening day of the 70th Farm Show. Thornburgh will be the first person to use PENpages, which gives Pennsylvanians a direct connection through their home computers to information from The Pennsylvania State University's College of Agriculture and other state and federal agencies.

For the past year and a half, faculty and staff in the College of Agriculture have been building the computer network, linking each Penn State campus and the offices of its Cooperative Extension Service. It increases the reach of Extension to any Pennsylvania resident having access to a microcomputer, modem (telephone hook-up) and appropriate software.

The system contains a variety of agricultural and extension information ranging from daily, weekly and monthly agricultural news and alerts to more permanent types of reference material. For example, home gardeners will be able to access information needed to identify and control many types of vegetable diseases—including up-to-minute details on the new diseases and the latest research.

Homeowners will be able to access information on clothing, textiles and home interiors. Young people will find information on 4-H career and leadership opportunities. Farmers will find specific information on many production agriculture concerns.

The Pennsylvania state legislature appropriated \$1.9 million in 1984 to begin the Extension Computerization Project, and provides funds for its con-

tinuing operation. Extension computer specialists have trained more than 750 faculty and staff members, in addition to purchasing equipment and developing PENpages.

To date they have completed 41 computer programs including family dollar decisions, farm business analysis, stress management and machinery

analysis. How it all works is the focus of the College's Farm Show exhibit. Extension computer support agents will be staffing the exhibition booth to explain the operation of the network and to answer any questions. A user guide will be available through county Cooperative Extension Service

agents, offering a detailed outline of the PENpages data base, as well as specifications on the necessary computer accessories.

Additional home horticultural information, poultry diagnostic lab reports, national and local agricultural market information and farm management programs are but a few of the topics under development.

"Experts predict that by 1990, 40 to 50 percent of families in the United States will be using computers at home for information exchange," says Graham Bell, Penn State Extension computer support coordinator. "The Pennsylvania Extension Network brings that future much closer for the people of Pennsylvania."

## Seniors to receive new high-calcium milk at Show

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania dairymen climbed on the calcium bandwagon in a big way last year, underwriting special research and putting hard-earned dollars into product development.

Next Monday at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, senior citizens will have a chance to taste one that made it — an easily digestible, high calcium milk from Lehigh Valley Farms.

The new product is the first of its kind in the nation, according to William Fouse, director of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Foods and Chemistry.

Called CalciMilk, it is aimed at

senior citizens and other individuals who are potential victims of the bone depleting osteoporosis and cannot drink regular milk. Lactose in the "hi cal" milk is converted to simple, more digestible sugars.

The producer-owned co-op will help observe Senior Citizens' Day at the Farm Show Jan. 13 by serving the free milk to senior visitors in the Farm Show's Main Lobby.

Is 65 too late to prevent osteoporosis? According to Lehigh Valley Farms, high calcium milk helps deter further bone deterioration.

Recent research indicates milk and other high calcium foods do

more than build sound bones. They also reduce colon cancer and influence blood pressure, studies find.

More good news for consumers and milk producers is expected later this year from a Penn State study funded by the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Board.

Not all new milk products deal with calcium. Lehigh Valley also markets Lactaid, a regular milk with the lactose converted to simple sugars.

A new milk product processed by Dairymen, Inc. at ultra high temperatures could unlock vending machines to the dairy industry. It is also sold in three

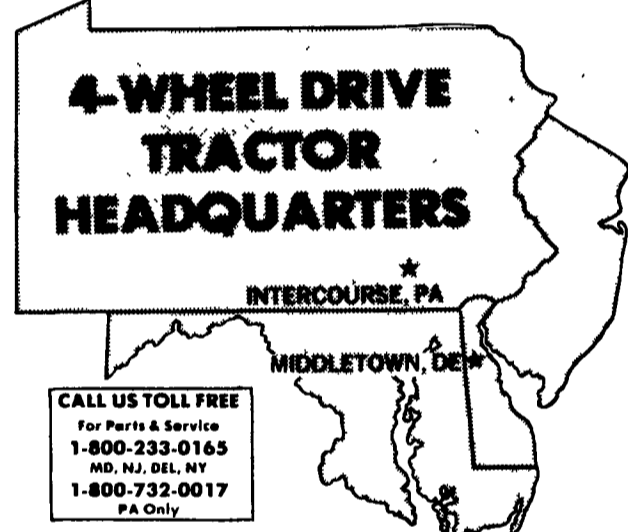
flavors and can be stored for months without refrigeration.

Also getting a hard look in dairymen-supported research are lactose-free yogurts and low fat cheeses.

Dairymen pay an average of \$21 per cow into national and local programs for milk promotion, research and product development. In Pennsylvania that could add up to \$14 million this year, according to estimates by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Such big dollars, of course, could mean more new dairy products down the road. A boon to dairymen and consumers alike.


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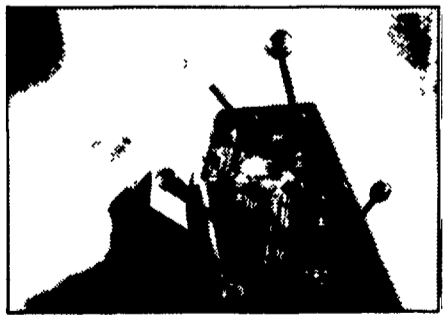


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