

# Increasing production by controlling mastitis

BY ROBIN PHILLIPS  
Staff Correspondent

LEESPORT — "A lot of dairy farmers could increase their production if they would understand the mammary system and treat it accordingly," stated Clyde Myers, Berks County Agent, as he began the program at the Southeast Pennsylvania Extension, "Mastitis and Milking Equipment Update" meeting last week.

The lineup of experts at the seminar attempted to enhance such an understanding by indepth discussions on mastitis. Going beyond merely stressing the need to teat dip and dry treat, the topics of the meeting dealt with exotic forms of mastitis, milking equipment problems and research, milk recording devices, teat dips and dry cow treatments, somatic cell counts, and new developments in milking equipment.

On hand to provide a very informative presentation and field many questions throughout the day were Dr. Larry Hutchinson, PSU Extension veterinarian, and Steve Spencer, PSU Extension dairy

specialist.

The understanding of somatic cell counts and the use of that knowledge was stressed throughout the day. The somatic cell count (SCC), a measurement of the leukocytes fighting infection in the cow's udder and present in a milk sample, is provided to participating dairymen on their monthly DHIA reports. The coded results on each cow can give advance notice to a dairyman of subclinical mastitis or an oncoming infection.

At a "code 3" or a measurement of 141,000 SCC, subclinical mastitis is present in the udder, and production loss begins. By a code of "5" or SCC of 500,000, clinical infection is obvious and the loss in production is critical.

It is estimated that \$75.00 to \$160.00 per cow/year is lost to high SCC or mastitis, and as much as one-half of all dairy cows may be infected in two quarters. It has also been shown that excessive somatic cell levels in milk indicate up to a 25% loss of production potential for the the herd.

Myers recommended looking at

the herd's trends over a year's time. By screening the SCC each month and possibly charting a cross section of the herd, trends in codes may be seen to lead to a problem within the herd. According to these trends, stated Myers, a dairyman can determine if housing problems, milking system performance, or spreading mastitis is in his herd and costing him daily and substantial losses.

High somatic cell counts in first-calf heifers when they freshen could be a sign of a sucking problem in group pens, or a housing problem with younger stock. Older cows developing high counts could be spreading mastitis within the herd. If a certain time of the year seems to be leading to higher SCC in the herd, poor housing or muddy conditions could be the source of the problem.

A thorough screening of the SCC and the use of the CMT (California Mastitis Test) to determine which quarters are infected can help the dairyman control the problem in



After the seminar, Steve Spencer was on hand to discuss particular problems with dairymen.

his herd by leading him to where the source of the problem may be, Myers continued. Fewer herd replacements are necessary when mastitis is controlled.

Dr. Larry Hutchinson discussed

"The Environment and Mastitis." "A cow can repair (the udder) somewhat after the infection period," Hutchinson began, "but she can never grow new milk

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Dr. George F. W. Haenlein and Susan Kyle, from West Chester, a sophomore at the Unviersity of Delaware.

★★★★ANNOUNCING:★★★★

## 1986 DELMAR MILKER SCHOOL

March 17, 1986 (Monday)

Pencader Grange Hall, Glasgow, Delaware  
(South of intersection of Del. 896 & U.S. 40)

9:00 a.m. till 3:30 p.m.

Dr. J. Woody Pankey, Ph.D., University of Vermont;

and

Dr. Robert B. Corbett, D.V.M., El Paso, Texas

will discuss:

9:30- 11:00 A.M. Mastitis Prevention & Control Program

Dr. Corbett

11:00- 12:00 Noon Hygiene in a Control Program

Dr. Pankey

12:00- 1:00 P.M. Lunch

1:00- 2:00 P.M. How Infections Occur

Dr. Pankey

2:00- 2:00 P.M. Mastitis Therapy

Dr. Corbett

3:00 P.M. Questions & Answers

\* LUNCH WILL BE SERVED FROM 12:00 till 1:00 BY THE LADIES OF THE PENCADER GRANGE \*

REGISTRATION STARTS AT 9:00 A.M.  
COST IS \$5.00 (Includes Lunch)

### INFORMATION:

Dr. George F.W. Haenlein

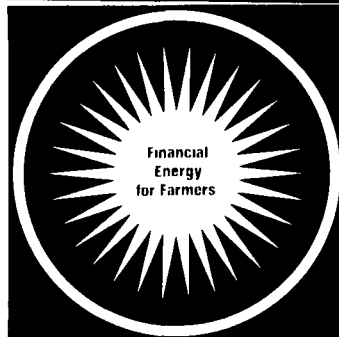
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