

# The Dairy Business

By  
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do not have a computer with direct access, they have a hand-held input device that the DHIA supervisor uses to send the monthly data directly to the central DHIA office. The very sophisticated system is called DART, which means Direct Access To Records by Telephone.

A DART user can send daily herd activity, including cows fresh, dried, sold, bred or in heat, as well as results of pregnancy checks, fresh cows, and group changes.

Herd health data and replacement heifer information can also be entered. Immediately after these updates are made, up-to-the-minute management reports can be printed in the farm office. The print-outs are tailor made to each dairyman's individual specifications, and can be altered easily at any time.

The computer file for each DHI herd on the DART program is maintained, processed, and edited just as for regular DHIA herds. The monthly information can get into the computer either from on-

the-farm minicomputers, or from a portable unit carried by the supervisor.

Reports can be recorded on hard copy, printed on standard sheets, or can be read from a monitor screen.

Information is probably no more accurate than our conventional system, but is a whole lot faster and up-to-date.

Most Florida dairy farms have access to a computerized feeding program that is operated by the University of Florida. Since most Florida dairymen purchase a large part of their forages and grains, it is rather expensive to feed cows, and every penny counts.

They learned long ago that rations for dairy cows must be balanced for nutrients, as well as minimum cost. Their principle source of forage is Coastal Bermuda grass and citrus pulp, when available. They also like corn silage, and use corn chop as the principle source of energy.

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, called IFAS, is right at

the head of the pack when it comes to computer technology. They sponsored the 1986 Southeastern Agribusiness Computer Conference, held in Lakeland, Florida.

It was really three shows in one — a classroom where experts lectured, a laboratory where the participants practiced 'hands on' computer courses, and a trade Show with commercial and University exhibitors demonstrated the latest in technology and applications. It was one of the largest and best that I ever attended.

Of course, Florida farmers have many of the same problems and worries that plague us up north. They are wondering what will happen with the federal dairy programs, how prices will hold up, and whether or not to get into the herd buy-out program.

They also have special problems like hot, humid summers, insects that we never heard of, and high labor and feed costs. Their production is generally lower too, with a state average about 14,000 pounds of milk per cow.

The average Florida dairy has 500 cows, and nearly every dairy does their own breeding. Heat takes its toll with conception, so many cows are bought as fresh, and sold when milked off for beef.

Florida's a nice place to visit, but I'd think twice about running a dairy there.

## Chester and Delaware County dairymen honored

Chester and Delaware County area dairymen were honored for having the high producing herds this past year at the twenty-second annual District 2 meeting for Atlantic Breeders Cooperative members held February 12, at the Oxford Fire Hall.

Receiving certificates of merit for having top DHIA averages were Arthur Hershey, Cochranville; Donald Horning, Honeybrook; Jesse Lair, Oxford; Timberview Farm, Cochranville; Hargret Dairy, Oxford; Vernon Guest, Pottstown; Floyd Miller & Sons, Spring City.

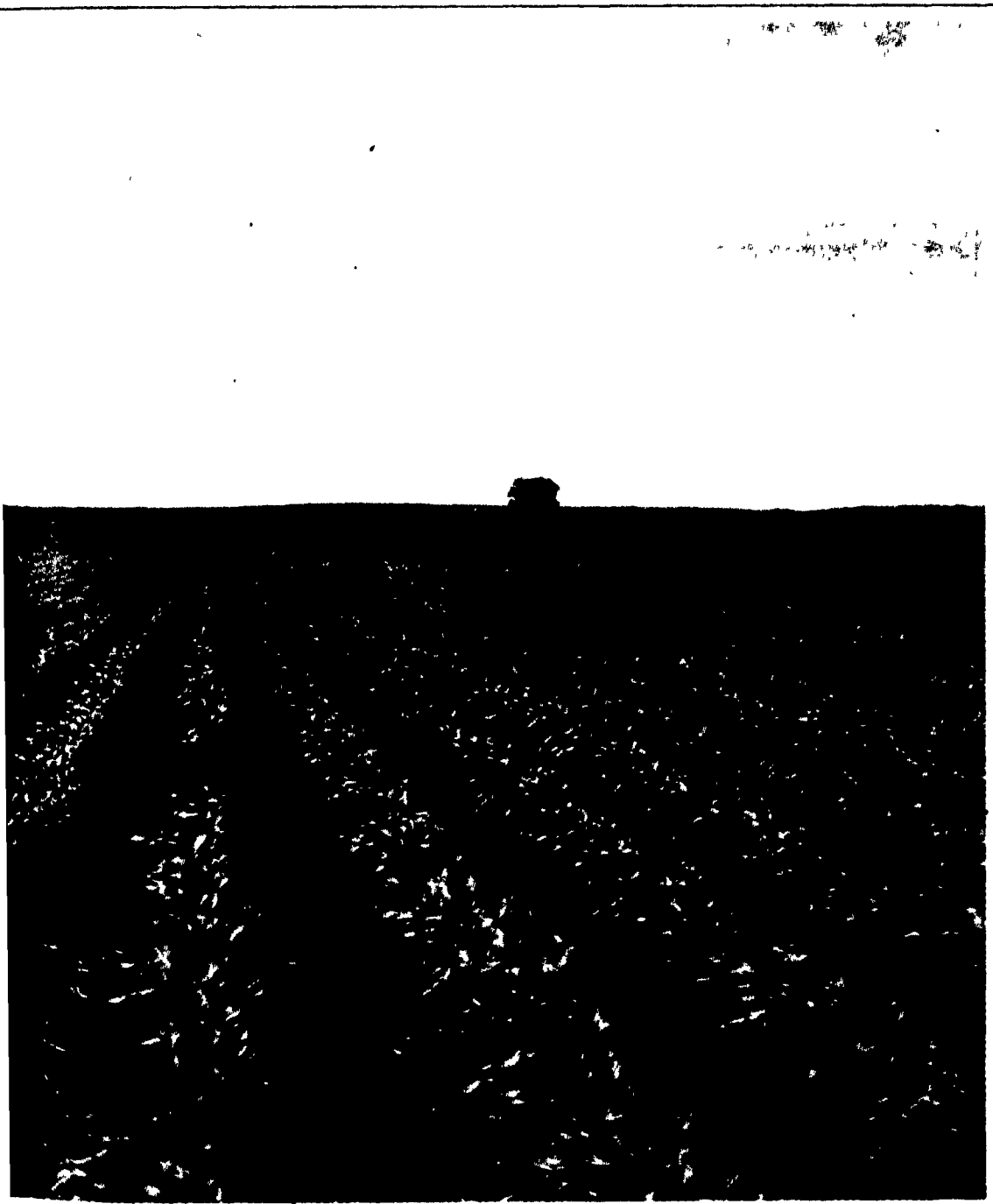
All herds were at least 10% above the state average for milk or butterfat production last year, while at least two-thirds of the cows in those herds are progeny of Atlantic sires. Awards were presented by Willis Ritchie, Atlantic's Field Supervisor for this area.

District II Director Dan Hudson of Felton Delaware, reported to members that several changes occurred in the AI industry during 1985. He said that the most significant one affecting Atlantic is the formation of Federated Genetics through a partnership agreement with Eastern AIC of Ithaca, NY and Louisiana Animal Breeders Cooperative at Baton Rouge, LA. The result, Mr. Hudson said is a much stronger selection of bulls for Atlantic members and the largest young sire sampling program in the AI industry.

Director Hudson also commented on the financial health of the cooperative noting that they exceeded their 1985 budget income goals.

Harry Roth, general manager, reported Atlantic emphasized its member service programs, improved both member and non-member sales, and improved its line-up of superior bulls in 1985.

Members present voted for District representatives for the coming year. Election results will be announced in the next issue of the Cooperatives newsletter.



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