

# Strasburg hosts National Milking Shorthorn Convention

**BY MARTHA J. GEHRINGER**  
STRASBURG — The American Milking Shorthorn Society recently held their National Convention at the Historic Strasburg Inn.

Breeders from over 27 states and three countries gathered to renew old acquaintances and return to the site of one of their best remembered conventions ten years ago. They discussed the current state of their society and how to enhance the future of this versatile breed.

They toured an Amish farm and saw a demonstration of working milking shorthorn steers. The annual meeting featured awards and a panel discussion on Genetic Expansion. The annual banquet witnessed the crowning of a new Milking Shorthorn Queen and the selling of a Milking Shorthorn quilt.

Dr. Dave Selner of 21st Century Genetics, Rex Powell of the USDA in Maryland, and Stuart Rowe is Inntsfail Farm in California participated in a panel discussion concerning the Society's Genetic Expansion program.

All of the panel members agreed that this program is valuable for the improvement of the breed, but it must be used wisely and in moderation.

"It's a progressive move," Powell said. "We want what is best for the breed and must take advantage of what's available," he continued. He also suggested the very best to be the top six red and white bulls.

"We have to go with what we are paid for or what we will be paid for,

and that appears to be pounds not percentages," Powell added when explaining what to consider when looking at a bull's proof.

Selner pointed out that the A.I. industry is looking for genetic advancement and needs to know where the breeder wants to make these advances. By knowing this the industry can proceed to select for these traits.

Cautioning that "there is no such thing as a perfect bull," Selner reminded breeders not to try to improve too many points with one mating. This will decrease the amount of improvement made in any one area, he noted.

When determining what outside bull to use, Selner suggested considering the economic importance of each trait to be corrected as well as maintaining breed characteristic.

"We wasted time by not using outside blood more often in our breeding," Rowe said. He also reminded breeders of the importance of maintaining the breed's identity.

Rowe suggested that for every one outside bull that is approved for use with Milking Shorthorn, a purebred bull should be added.

"This is our best chance to make genetic progress and remain competitive," Rowe added. However, he continued, a better system is needed to evaluate this progress.

President Harold Krause reported that the board approved using a full-time executive assistant in their new office in

Beloit, WI. This economic action also moves the executive secretary-treasurer to a part-time position.

This past year the Society also moved their office into the Brown Swiss office in Beloit. Here they will be able to utilize the computer and perhaps the classifiers of the Swiss Association.

Krause noted these changes have aided in returning the society to a more stable financial situation.

Fred Slatter from Australia was honored for his continuous efforts to bring the best blood of the Illawara breed into America to strength the genetic pool of the Milking Shorthorn.

The 1986 National Milking Shorthorn Queen crowned at the banquet was Trudy York from Maine.

Following the banquet 28 items from across the country were auctioned off for a total of \$2,566. This sale featured the Milking Shorthorn quilt with a cow and four calves. This quilt was handmade by Maryjane Stoltzfus and Reba Yoder from Berks County and sold for \$900 to Mike and Bobbi Rauch of Billings MO.

A positive attitude about the financial and genetic progress of the Society was present at the convention. Those in attendance were assured that the Society is on the right path to financial stability and that the breed will survive.

The 1987 convention is set for Wisconsin.



Bradford Ellsworth, executive secretary-treasurer of the American Milking Shorthorn Society (left), presents the award for top gaining bull to Robert P. Scott, Homer City, at the recent national convention. Scott is president of the Pennsylvania Society.



Day one of the National Milking Shorthorn Association's annual convention in Lancaster featured a working steer demonstration by members of the Franklin County 4-H Working Steer Club. The club's 14 members, from Farmington, ME, put this pair of steers through their paces for those attending Thursday's activities.

## Pacesetter daughter tops sale

**BY MARTHA J. GEHRINGER**  
STRASBURG — The top selling animal at the National Milking Shorthorn sale was Wilder Farm Laurie. She sold for \$2,050 to Kingsdale Farm in Onida, IL and was consigned by Sam Yoder, Shoemakersville.

This three-year-old cow was sired by the top bull in the breed, Korncrest Pacesetter. Her dam, Wilder Farm Lynne, is classified

VG-85.

Second high selling animal was Spruce Hill RS Aubry EXP. Consigned by J. Douglas Marsh, she sold for \$1,625 to A-Grand-View Farm, Strasburg.

This bred heifer from Class Reunion is due in June to Bettina's Promise. Her dam produce a record of 19,123 pounds of milk with a 4.2 percent test as a six-year old.

Next in the bidding was Wildwood Dixie Leah. This bred heifer sold for \$1,200 to Bill Harris of Illinois. She was consigned by Eldo Bentley of Minnesota.

The unofficial average on 35 lots was \$922. The 12 bred heifers averaged \$954 and the 13 cows averaged \$1,158.

These averages are down from what was anticipated since Pennsylvania would not allow several animals in from Class C states. It was the animals that were prevented from entering the state that were expected to top the sale.

Executive Secretary Ellsworth commenting on this development stated, "Pennsylvania was not

reasonable. We guaranteed that all the animals would pass every test they would require. They were more intent on enforcing the rules to the letter and would not allow these animals in."

"In spite of this, we will come back anytime. It's impossible to

have a bad time in Pennsylvania," Ellsworth added.

The sale was sponsored and managed by the American Milking Shorthorn Society. Auctioneer for the day was Abe Dittenbach, president of New Holland Sales.

## State participation in the buyout 'fairly low'

Participation in the Milk Production Termination Program (MPTP) will be fairly low in Pennsylvania. Only 418 dairy farmers, or about 3% of the total number of dairy farmers, had their bids accepted by the USDA. The 1985 milk marketings of these 418 farmers was about 271 million pounds. These farmers will receive about \$42 million for ceasing production for 5 years and selling 20,614 cows; 7,314 heifers and 5,386 calves. Assessments on Pennsylvania dairy farmers who remain in production which will be used to help pay for the cost of the MPTP will amount to about \$47 million. Thus, at least with respect to Pennsylvania, the MPTP program is more than self-supporting. In the 1st period, 265 dairy farmers or 63%, are required to cease production and sell their animals by August 31, 1986. They will sell 12,260 cows; 4,171 heifers and 3,043 calves which should reduce milk production in 1986 by about 158 million pounds. Fifty-nine dairy farmers will sell out in the 2nd period and 94 will sell out in the 3rd period both of which will be in 1987.

The distribution of farmers entering the MPTP is fairly evenly spread across the state with 59 of the 67 counties having at least one farmer participating in the

program. Lancaster has the highest number of farmers entering the program with 27. Susquehanna is second with 23, followed by Somerset with 22, Tioga with 21, Erie and Crawford each with 18 and Wayne with 17. Chester, Berks, Bucks, York, Wyoming, Washington and Franklin counties will each have from 10 to 15 farmers participating in the program. Only 4 counties (Elk, Bucks, Cambria and Lackawanna) will have a greater than 10% decrease in the number of dairy farms. There are 15 counties which will have a decrease in farm numbers from 5 to 10%. Several of these are among the largest dairy counties, in terms of farm numbers, in Pennsylvania. These are Somerset, Susquehanna, Wayne and Tioga counties. Since the participation and subsequent decrease in farm numbers will be fairly uniform, the dairy industry and its service industries should not suffer greatly from the participation of Pennsylvania dairy farmers in the MPTP.

Another important aspect of participation in the MPTP in Pennsylvania is the size of herd of the participants. On average, they were somewhat smaller than the state average herd size of 53 cows at the time they submitted their

bids. This is attested to the fact that, although almost 3% of Pennsylvania dairy farms are participating, they account for only about 2.8% of Pennsylvania's 1985 marketings. The herd size of the 418 participants ranged from 4 to 708 cows. Only 4 farms had herds with 200 or more cows, 22 farms had herds which ranged from 100 to 199 cows, 38 farms had herds which ranged from 75 to 99 cows and 35 farms had herds which ranged from 60 to 74 cows.

Another factor, which may prove to be important to the dairy industry in the future, is how many of the 418 farmers were financially stressed. If only a few of all those under financial stress had bids accepted, there may be significant additional decrease in the number of farmers outside of the MPTP program because they cannot handle the continuing cost-price squeeze in the future. When all the dust finally settles, the Pennsylvania dairy industry may be better off in the future as a result of the MPTP. Pennsylvania's lower level of participation relative to the rest of the U.S. (except for Nevada) suggests an underlying strength in the industry that should bode well for the Pennsylvania dairy industry for whatever lies in the future.



Second highest selling animal at \$1,625 was Spruce Hill RS Aubry EXP. She was consigned by J. Douglas Marsh and purchased by A Grand View Farm. Chris Young is at the lead.



Wilder Farm Laurie was the top selling animal at the Milking Shorthorn Sale. She sold for \$2,050 to Kingsdale Farm, Onida, IL. Pictured from left are: Sam Yoder, consignor; Keith King, of Kingsdale Farm; and Rick Reese on the halter.