

# Press Conference Held

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 stages of the lactation cycle. In 1986, we completed a 38-week experiment, with recombinant somatotropin."

"Lactating cows treated with somatotropin produce at higher levels for longer periods of time. In effect, "good" producing cows become "better" producers and "better" producers become "excellent" producers. Production increases of 40% have been obtained but responses of 10 to 20 percent are more likely under field conditions," he said.

"Cows injected with somatotropin consume more feed but efficiency is improved because more nutrients are directed to milk. Normal feeding strategies for high producing cows need to be followed to realize the full benefits of somatotropin."

"Milk quality and safety are critical factors. Milk composition is not changed when cows are fed diets that provide needed amounts of energy and protein. Milk from cows not treated with somatotropin often contains low levels of endogenous somatotropin. Levels are not increased when cows are injected with somatotropin. Bovine somatotropin is not biologically active in humans. Because of gastric and intestinal proteases, somatotropin is inactivated when consumed."

Dean Robert M. Marshak opened the formal afternoon conference. "In agriculture as in any other industry," Marshak said, "increased productivity comes through technology. The past 50 years of increased agricultural productivity has been a manner of national pride of our great achievements. These

achievements were relatively easy when land and water were plentiful and energy was cheap.

Today large segments of agricultural land are going for development. And a great deal of agricultural land is misused or unused. In addition, water has become a threatened resource and energy is no longer cheap.

Therefore, if we are going to have gains in productivity and profitability, it's going to come mainly through applications to agriculture of revolutionary practices in biotechnology and medicine.



Dr. Karl L. Simkins, American Cyanamid Company described the company's support of somatotrophin research at Monday's press conference.



Dr. William Chalupa explains test program for somatotrophin to the national press in Hopeland Farms free-stall barn.

## Somatotropin Hearing Held

WASHINGTON D.C. — Wednesday, members of the House Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry heard testimony, from representatives of federal agencies and several biotechnology firms, concerning bovine somatotropin.

The FDA spokesman noted that they are in favor of the new technology if it is able to improve efficiency. They expect it to be approved for use between 1988 and 1990.

Concern was expressed on the USDA's conflicting role in financing the research to develop BST as well as their role in reducing the surplus milk situation.

Representatives of drug manufacturers, looking at the macroeconomics of the product, pointed out that by increasing the production efficiency of the dairy industry, the overall costs of the dairy products would be

decreased.

Drug and academic personnel looked at the implications of the large farms versus small farms using BST and concluded that it is just as advantageous to small farmers as large farmers. In their conclusions they emphasized the prerequisite of good management practices on both types of farms.

John Adams of the National Milk Producers Federation noted that little testimony was given concerning the overall implications of BST. While NMPF recognizes the need to improve efficiency, accelerated overproduction could drop prices even more if the present surplus situation is not corrected. And, he added, farmers will continue to play catch-up on day-to-day costs.

NMPF also encouraged more evaluation on all aspects of the issue, not just production.

Jeremy Rifkin of the Foundation

on Economic Trends, Douglas LaFollette of the Wisconsin Family Farm Defense Fund, and the Humane Society of the United States, jointly filed a petition calling for the FDA to conduct an environmental impact study of BST. To be included in the study would be the impact of utilizing more feed, and possible alteration in land use patterns to grow the additional feed.

Another point that was noted is that once BST is approved, the adoption of the practice will probably be conservative. Some farmers may use the product on only part of their herd initially, while others may not use it at all.

Conclusions drawn from the hearings were that BST will not have an pronounced impact as originally thought. Expected increases in production now stand at 15 to 25 percent. This figure could be altered, depending when the product becomes available.



Rep. E. (Kika) de la Garza answers the press while on a visit to Chester County.

## Penn State Proposal

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Foundation listed the objectives of the dairy food research centers as follows:

- to ensure the viability of the American dairy industry over the long term through improved marketability of domestically-produced dairy products.

- to expand the capacity of academic research centers to generate fundamental information and for training of dairy food scientists for industry, academic and public sector careers.

- to increase the number of academic positions dedicated to research and teaching programs in dairy food science.

- to make dairy food research more attractive for support by funding agencies, e.g., USDA, National Science Foundation,

private foundations, etc.

- to reverse the progressive decrease in support (governmental, state, industry and academic) for dairy food science programs (teaching, training, research).

The national board proposes to put up a minimum of \$200,000 per year for each designated center. The initial contract is for a five-year basis with the opportunity for renewal. They would like industry and the University to match the funds on a three-way commitment to the research program. A total of five or six centers around the nation are expected to be awarded. The research is deemed necessary as the next step in the dairy promotion success story that has until now centered mostly in the advertising and marketing areas.

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