## Holstein Group Sees Embryos At Barn Meeting

**BY SUE CROW Maryland Correspondent** 

EMMITSBURG, Md. - A cold drizzly October day last Saturday greeted those in attendance at the Maryland Holstein Association's barn meeting. They group witnessed an informal demonstration on the flushing, splitting and implanting of embryos, performed by Dr. Allen McCauley and his team from Em-Tram, Elizabethtown,

McCauley and Dr. Boyd Henderson demonstrated the flushing technique by using five cows provided by Hills-Hope and Coldsprings Farms. Although he explained the basic principles from a beginner's standpoint, McCauley's also bought out points useful for the most experienced person in ET work.

At the beginning of the demonstration the cows were given a injection of Lydocane, a spinal block. Lydocane prevents

the vet while he performing the flushing procedure by numbing the back end of their bodies.

The entire process for the five cows took two hours and netted in 18 embryos from one recipient.

Beth Grove assisted with the flushing procedure which resembled an assembly line. McCauley noted this practice is the only way to be cost effective.

McCauley also emphasized the importance of using healthy heifers as recipients. He noted that animals they could have used in the past as recipients, would never qualify now. He said this is one place corners can't be cut.

Although the whole process is not complicated, McCauley pointed out, it all has to be done correctly to work.

The afternoon session featured McCauley's wife, Susan Hallowell, demonstrating how embryos are split. She worked through a

the animal from straining against microscope which was hooked up to a television monitor, permitting the group to view the process.

McCauley concluded the day with a discussion on the future of ET's on the farm.

He emphasized the need to work only with cows that have marketable eggs, especially male. So far no reliable sexing procedure is available; experimentation in this area is ongoing, McCauley

The goal for ET work is to be able to freeze and thaw the embryo in a cotton plugged straw and then place the embryo in the cow with a minimum of handling in between. Last year Em-Tram posted a 64 percent survival rate with frozen embryos; at Em-Tram West, Turlock, Calif., they recorded a rate of 75 percent.

This year's host farm for the barn meeting was Hills-Hope run by David and Sally Hill, Em-



Dr. Boyd Henderson of Em-Tram, Elizabethtown, Pa., points out embryos in various stages of division on the television monitor.

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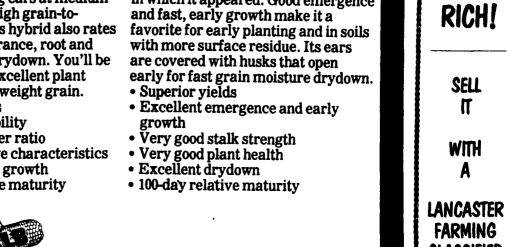
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