

Egg Producers Confront Cholesterol Issue

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Nutrition Center in Washington two and a half years ago. Funded by the American Egg Board, the center's mission is "to put the whole issue of cholesterol and heart disease into perspective," says the center's director, Cathy McCharen.

Although too much cholesterol in the diet can lead to elevated blood cholesterol in some cases, other factors, such as consumption of saturated fats, excess body weight, lack of exercise and stress can also drive cholesterol levels dangerously high, says McCharen.

The trade show also featured a number of seminars, one of which dealt at length with the issue of egg consumption. Speaking on food consumption trends in the United States, Suzanne Harris, USDA's deputy assistant secretary of food and consumer services, agreed that Americans may be overreacting to the egg-cholesterol issue.

"We know that egg consumption has gone down," said Harris, noting that USDA statistics show

that the percentage of women reporting eating eggs dropped from 29.3 percent in 1977 to 24.3 percent last year.

Harris said that cholesterol consumption averages 300 milligrams per day for women and 440 milligrams for men. Since men require a higher daily calorie intake than women, these levels work out to comparable intakes on a per-calorie basis, she said.

Like UEP's leadership, Harris believes that setting allowable cholesterol limits for the population as a whole oversimplifies a complex issue. In particular, she finds the American Heart Association's guidelines of 100 milligrams of cholesterol per 1,000 calories to be unrealistic.

"The problem is that very few people are meeting those guidelines," she says. Women, in particular, have difficulty consuming sufficient calories while staying below the Heart Association's cholesterol guidelines.

Labeling eggs a "nutrient-dense" food, Harris pointed out

that they provide nearly all the essential nutrients except niacin and vitamin C, while at the same time being relatively low in calories. Particularly for women, she said, limiting egg intake can do more harm than good.

While eggs are well-known for their cholesterol content, other sources of cholesterol include shellfish, chicken and red meat.

One of the problems in trying to limit cholesterol is the fact that eggs are such a ubiquitous ingredient in many kinds of prepared foods, Harris said, adding that cholesterol labeling is not a common practice as yet.

While most people's systems are able to regulate cholesterol levels, hyperlipidemics--those whose livers tend to overproduce blood cholesterol--are sensitive to high levels in their diets. Because of the variation from one individual to another, Harris stressed the importance of cholesterol screening. "People don't know their cholesterol level like they know their blood pressure," she pointed out.

In addition to attending seminars dealing with egg consumption, leasing in agriculture and agricultural insurance, conference goers had the opportunity to have their blood cholesterol levels checked free of charge by Egg Nutrition Center personnel. Center director Cathy McCharen points out that the center's screening equipment is available to egg industry-related groups who would like to do cholesterol testing in their areas. For more information on this service contact the Egg Nutrition Center, 2501 M Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, phone: 202-833-8850.



UEP's Nutrition Center director Cathy McCharen looks on as technician Vicki Hunter takes blood sample for cholesterol screening from Pa. Poultry Federation director John Hoffman.



Northeast UEP Trade Show chairman Bruce Limpert (center) welcomed regional president Christine Bushway and chairman of the board Joe Cohen to Monday's event in Atlantic City.

AFBF To Benefit From Satellite Communications

PARK RIDGE, Ill. — The American Farm Bureau Federation has signed a contract with AT&T to establish a nationwide satellite communication system.

The system will allow the nation's largest farm organization to transmit data and video messages among national, state and county Farm Bureau offices via satellite in a more reliable and efficient manner than traditional information delivery systems.

AT&T's Skynet Star Network Service, the point to multipoint satellite network, is being evaluated, with five sites in Kansas, five sites in Texas and the national headquarters in Park Ridge participating.

Dean Kleckner, AFBF

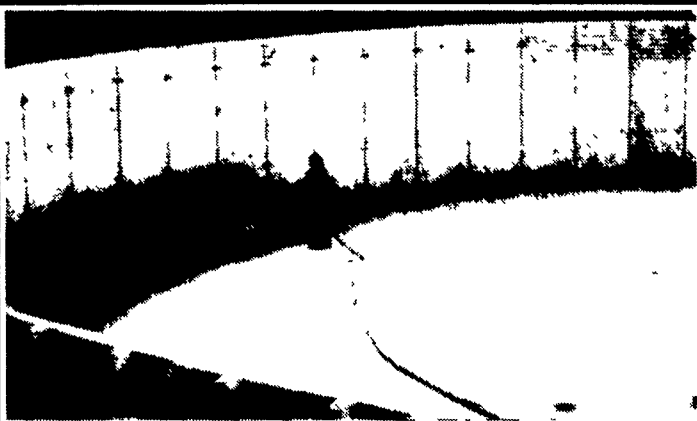
president, said satisfactory completion of the test program would result in the installation of equipment in the contiguous 48 states. "The states will be able to set up communication systems with their county offices for both data and video if they wish," he said.

"Two primary benefits of using the satellite are price predictability for our Farm Bureaus and affiliated services and easier access of market information by farmers," the farm leader said.

The service also gives Farm Bureau the ability to communicate with members via one-way video. Kleckner said "One recent study showed that a meeting involving 400 people cost almost \$300 a person but videoconferencing costs only a fraction of that."

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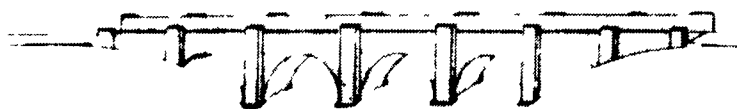
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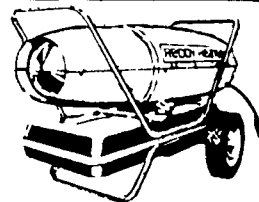


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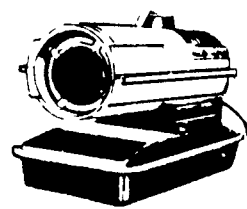
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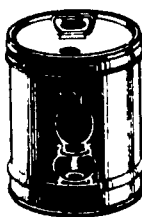


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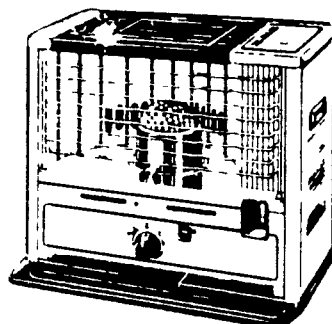


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