

Pa. Milk Consumption Study

(Continued from Page A33)

It seems to be that decisions are made either to purchase cola or a fluid milk without regard to the price of either beverage.

The lack of influence of income on fluid milk consumption suggests that fluid milk may have become a staple in the diet which is purchased regardless of the level of income. Increases in the level of income don't appear to cause consumers to purchase more fluid milk. It also appears that income

doesn't affect the type of fluid milk purchased.

The demographic variables, on the whole, did not appear to have a strong influence on fluid milk consumption.

The exception is for the effects of the proportion of females on 2 percent, 1 percent, and skim milk consumption.

It appears that women prefer 1 percent milk when they choose a fluid milk beverage. However, it also appears that they are not

consumers of fluid beverages, even 1 percent milk, in large quantities.

This may be a good target group for advertisers since there is much to gain from this group in increasing overall fluid milk consumption in addition to women's greater need for calcium.

Overall, the study suggests that the price of the product is a somewhat important factor in consumers' purchases of fluid milk products in Pennsylvania. However, it suggests that there are some strong factors which are not

price, income or demographically related which affect the consumption of fluid milk beverages.

The most prominent of these are the probable changing tastes and preferences of consumers, the concern with health, and the avoidance of fat in the diet. These, coupled with the many alternative beverage products which consumers have the opportunity to purchase may have become very important factors in the consumers' decisions to purchase fluid milk products.

Limitations Of The Study

There are some limitations on this study. The study used market averages and sometimes with aggregation (using averages) some factors that do have a strong influence on consumption get watered down or averaged enough so they appear not to have an important influence on consumption. The inability to use market prices for 2 percent, 1 percent, and skim milk and the fact that there was such a small range in all prices used were also limitations in the study.

However, the study was an important first step in the analysis of factors affecting consumption of fluid milk products in Pennsylvania. It did determine those factors which influence milk consumption on a broad, market-wide basis. This should provide useful information to policy-makers who set minimum resale prices in Pennsylvania and who are interested in the market-wide effects.

A follow-up study is desirable, however, to avoid some of the limitations of this study.

A study at the household level would be able to pinpoint with more accuracy the effects that fluid milk prices, income, prices of substitute products, and demographic variables have on fluid milk consumption.

Other studies could address the issues of changing tastes and preferences. The health considerations which are so prevalent in consumers' food purchase decisions today, and the effect that the increasing number of meals consumed away from home have on fluid milk consumption.

Harford Extension Winter Meetings Slated

BEL AIR, Md. — Agriculture extension agents, Brenda Schucker and Reg Traband, recently announced on the four Tuesday evenings in February the Harford Extension Office will hold their 1987 Farm Winter Meetings.

This year the Tuesday evening sessions will be held beginning at 7:30 in the extension meeting room at the County Administrative Services Building, 220 S. Main St., Bel Air, MD.

The first session on Feb. 3 will include a general look at the National agricultural policy and economic outlook for agriculture. There will follow a discussion of government agricultural programs by a representative of ASCS. The final speaker that evening will give perspective and a feed broker's view of grain marketing.

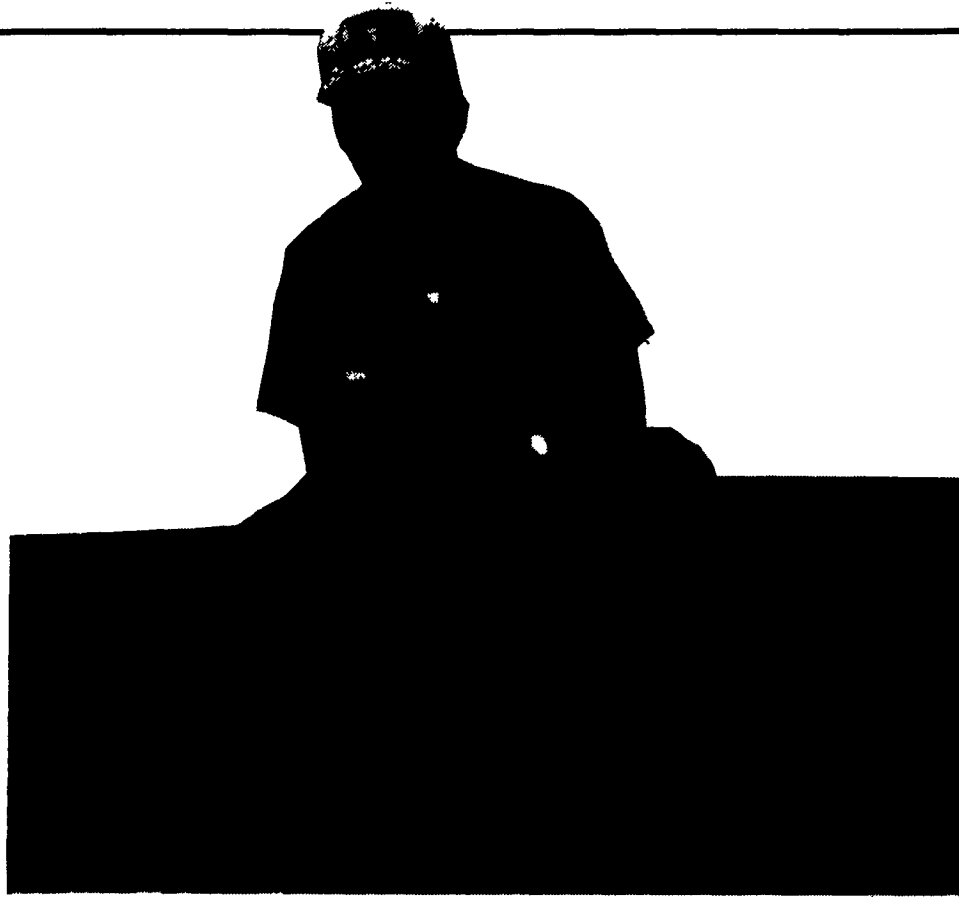
Feb. 10 will be dairy night. The program will include mastitis management and evaluation of DHI records for dairy farmers. This will be followed by a videotape on best-management practices for dairy farmers and a personal testimony by a local dairyman on his experiences in managing mastitis.

Crop management will be the center of discussion on Feb. 17. That evening there will be a discussion of what's new in field crop weed control and techniques for obtaining maximum yields from alfalfa.

The final evening of the four sessions on Feb. 24 will be devoted to beef marketing and obtaining optimum value from small grain forages.

In case of inclement weather, agents noted, the meetings will be held unless travel conditions are so severe that travel is nearly impossible. If there are questions about these meetings being held call the local Extension Office during the afternoon on any Tuesday in February. The phone number is 838-6000, Ext. 255.

Cimarron Alfalfa Proven Performance



Near Mullica Hill, in the southern part of New Jersey, one finds acre after acre of green alfalfa fields. It is a feast for the eyes of a dairyman and truly a feast for the herd at Wellcrest Farm. Owner, Virgil W. Eachus, can be found in one of these fields often, during the summer and fall, harvesting a cutting of the Cimarron alfalfa that flourishes here.

"We had very dry springs in 1985 and 1986, but the stands of Cimarron we got were unbelievable," Virgil says. "Seedling vigor on Cimarron is something else - It jumps right out of the ground - It just never stops."

More than three hundred head of Wellcrest cattle consume a big part of his 250 alfalfa acres as haylage. The rest is sold as cash crop hay - about ten thousand bales last year. That's why growing the best alfalfa crop he can grow is so important to Virgil and his family.

"The first year I planted it, we put Cimarron and WL313, half and half, in the same field. The Cimarron is better - It's leafier and it's yielding better than the WL varieties we used to plant," says Virgil. "I've been planting alfalfa for thirty years and I've never seen anything like this."

Serious alfalfa producers grow Cimarron.

That's the Cimarron story from Mullica Hill, New Jersey.

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