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## Dairy Herd Replacement: Here Is How These Farmers Do It Successfully

BY PAT PURCELL

Editor's note: This is the first article in a series discussing dairy herd replacement programs.

LITITZ — The most important part of the dairy herd is the milking cow.

True or false. The temptation to answer true to that statement is easily understood. After all it is the milking cow which determines the cash flow of the operation. But although the milking cow generates the monthly income, the future, the survival, the stability of the dairy farm is dependant upon the quality of the heifers. While it may be easier for the farmer to be attentive to the animals which determine the size of the milk check, if the young

stock is not properly attended, the dairy farm's future will be cut short.

### HERD REPLACEMENT: GOALS, COSTS, CONSIDERATIONS

Dairy herd replacement is a multi-faceted and long-term project. A successful replacement program begins with breeding and ends with a successful culling program, with many variables and critical considerations in between. Simply, dairy herd replacement is not only the process of raising healthy heifers. It is much more than that.

The goal of any business person is to keep cash flowing by keeping production up and costs down. In an effort to improve milk production and subsequently income the



The Guernsey heifers are not contributing to the milk check yet, but they deserve the same attention and quality care as the milking cows.

dairy herd must be in a constant and steady state of transition. Breeding, selection and culling keep the better producers in the milking stalls.

Low producers, whether aged cows, or cows with health and/or breeding problems, reach a point when they are no longer cost effective to keep in the herd. They can actually cost the operator more dollars than they make by taking up the stall which could be occupied by a heifer of better quality. The low producer can cost the business more if kept than replaced.

Although it may at first appear simple, the decision to cull an individual cow is a complicated procedure. Culling does not begin when the cow reaches the herd. Culling

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## Farmers Union Chief Tells State Convention About Opportunities

WEST MIDDLESEX — An opportunity exists for Pennsylvania Farmers Union members to guide family agriculture away from profiteering by giant conglomerates and back to the values of providing a fair income for producers. That was the message National Farmers Union President Cy Carpenter told members and delegates attending PFU's annual convention at the Sheraton She-

rango Inn here.

Carpenter said that if farmers don't stand up for their rights, Pennsylvania can expect to lose \$100 million from its economy through expected cuts in dairy prices, and farmers can expect to find their land trading on Wall Street.

The family farm leader objected to a possibility outlined in a Jane Bryant Quinn column that appeared in the June 22 issue of *Newsweek*. Quinn wrote, "Right now, farmers themselves are the biggest buyers of their neighbors' properties. Agriculture is not yet

being routinely chopped into neat little units and tied with a ribbon for Wall Street's investment machines. That day will come. Ten years from now wheat farms may be packaged for Individual

Retirement Accounts the way apartment houses are today."

Citing the instability of Wall Street markets, Carpenter asked the farmers, "How many of you would like to be farming on land

subject to trading on Wall Street? Current policies are moving in that direction." He said, "We do need development and progress, but not as a cheap substitute for a fair

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## Eastern President Says We Need Regional Approach

FORKSVILLE (Sullivan Co.) — Laverne McCarty has always had strong convictions about

marketing and promoting milk.

So it was no surprise this fall when the Sullivan County, Pa., was elected president of the 3700-member Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative.

Or when two weeks later he was reappointed director of the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program.

McCarty has been on the go ever since.

In Washington, it is predicted the USDA will cut dairy supports 50¢ a hundred on January 1. This to control surpluses.

"But that doesn't make any

sense in the Northeast," Laverne insists. "We're short. Eastern's scrambling for milk."

Where is the surplus then?

"On the west coast," he says.

McCarty and other Northeast dairy leaders complain that local dairymen shouldn't take the rap for a west coast production splurge. They'd like to see a regional approach to such dairy problems.

To meet that goal, they've formed the Northeast Legislative Committee of Farm Cooperatives and hired a fulltime Washington lobbyist.

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## Lancaster Ag-Industry Banquet Set For Nov. 24

LANCASTER — Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Boyd E. Wolff will be the featured speaker at the 11th annual Agriculture-Industry Banquet sponsored by the Agriculture Committee of The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The banquet will be held Tuesday, November 24, at 7 p.m. at the Olde Hickory Inn, 2363 Oregon Pike, Lancaster.

The purpose of the annual event is to honor those involved in agriculture in Lancaster County. Businesses in agriculture-related enterprises use the banquet as an opportunity to pay tribute to their employees and customers.

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Cy Carpenter

## PA Members To Receive Highest FFA Degree

Sixteen members of the Pennsylvania FFA Association will receive their American Farmer Degrees at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, this week.

The American Farmer Degree is based on demonstrated leadership ability and outstanding agricultural production, processing on service records. As the highest degree members can achieve, only 728 of the 416,000 members who earned Chapter and State Farmer Degrees will receive the National Award.

American Farmer recipients from Pennsylvania are: Carl Warren Allen, Granville Summit, (Troy FFA Chapter, Troy Area Senior High School); John Samuel Byers, Shippensburg, (Shippensburg FFA Chapter, Shippensburg Area Sr. H.S.); Eric L. Corle, Roaring Spring, (Northern Bedford County FFA Chapter, Northern Bedford Co. H.S.); Kenneth R. Diebold, Altoona, (Warriors Mark FFA Chapter, Tyrone Area High School); Frank L. Hartley, Ronks, (Turn to Page A23)



New Eastern Milk Producers president Laverne McCarty, Forksville, with his farm team -- sons Brian, left, and Tracy, right. They're milking 85 cows.