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Lancaster Farming

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USDA's Myers Urges Farmers To Political Activity

BY LISA RISSER

CAMP HILL — In this busy time of the year, it's difficult to become and stay involved in politics, yet that is exactly what Peter C. Myers, deputy secretary for the United States Department of Agriculture is urging farmers to do.

Addressing nearly 120 farmers and politicians Thursday night at the annual FARMERS fundraiser, Myers stressed the importance of farmers to be active in the political arena so that their opinions and

feelings could be known in government. The health of the nation's agricultural economy is greatly influenced by decisions made by politicians.

"The agricultural outlook is much better," Myers said. The rosier outlook is due to weather conditions in the rest of the world, which has caused the other countries to increase imports. It also can be attributed to the more positive attitude of farmers and a good farm program, according to Myers.

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Conservationist Questions Lancaster's Future Quality Of Life

BY PAT PURCELL

LANCASTER — How relaxing it is to drive through Lancaster County on a summer Saturday afternoon along Route 30! How the pressures of a work day seem to melt as commuters take that slow, leisurely drive home via Route 23, the Route 30 bypass, Route 72 and Route 322.

Today Lancaster County is home to 400,000 people. And if the above scenario leaves you sneering in disbelief then imagine this. By the year 2010, which is

roughly 20 years away, 600,000 people will call Lancaster County home. And that estimate is based on current rates of growth which are modest. That is a 50 percent increase. Where will they live? Where will they work? And how will it affect the quality of life as we know it today?

These were the questions with which Douglas Wheeler, Vice-President of the Conservation Foundation challenged Lancaster County concerned citizens Thursday.

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Johnes: The Silent Enemy Of Dairy Farmers

BY PAT PURCELL

LITITZ — In Pennsylvania seven percent of all cull dairy animals arriving at slaughter plants are infected with Johnes disease while the national rate is just three percent, according to Dr. Larry Hutchinson, PSU Extension Veterinarian.

"This tells us Johnes is more of a problem in Pennsylvania than in other areas of the country and especially in the Lancaster County area. I would say that a Lancaster County dairy farmer, if he's buying animals in the area, sooner or later he is going to run into Johnes. The best recommendation I can make is not to buy cattle without knowing status of the herd. That is easy to say and difficult to do," said Hutchinson.

Penn State University and University of Pennsylvania have combined are conducting a two-year in-depth study of 20 infected herds in the Lancaster and Lebanon county. Hutchinson says they are working on new methods of testing

which are accurate and deliver quicker results. Also, new management practices are being employed to help clean-up Johnes in infected herds.

The only accurate available diagnostic test for Johnes is done by fecal culture and takes three to four months to get results. That is a long time to feed a cow and keep a cow in the herd and exposing other animals to this deadly disease. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin have developed a test using deoxy ribonucleic acid which will produce results in three days. However, it is not on the market yet.

Johnes is a disease of ruminant animals. Although the incidence of Johnes is higher in dairy cattle, all breeds of cattle, sheep and goats are susceptible. It is caused by a slow-growing bacteria which destroys the intestinal lining of the animal and prevents any nutrients from being absorbed from feed. The animal actually starves to death.

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Planting time has arrived all across "Lancaster Farming's" circulation area. In this photograph, potatoes were going in the ground on the Kreider Farms, east of Mannheim. About 150 of the 500 total acres had been planted by Wednesday afternoon when managing editor, Everett Newswanger, caught up with the operation.

Beef Check-Off

Will It Die Or Survive The Vote?

BY LISA RISSER

LITITZ — Three could be the lucky number for the national beef referendum. Defeated twice before, in 1977 and 1980, by cattlemen who viewed the promotional check-off as a tax, the program stands a good chance of being voted into permanency according to Bob Coleman, executive director of the Pennsylvania Beef Council.

"This promotion, which has been in effect for 22 months, has demonstrated to the producer, who pays the bill, that it has done good," Coleman stated. "Promotion has changed the public conception of beef as a healthy food."

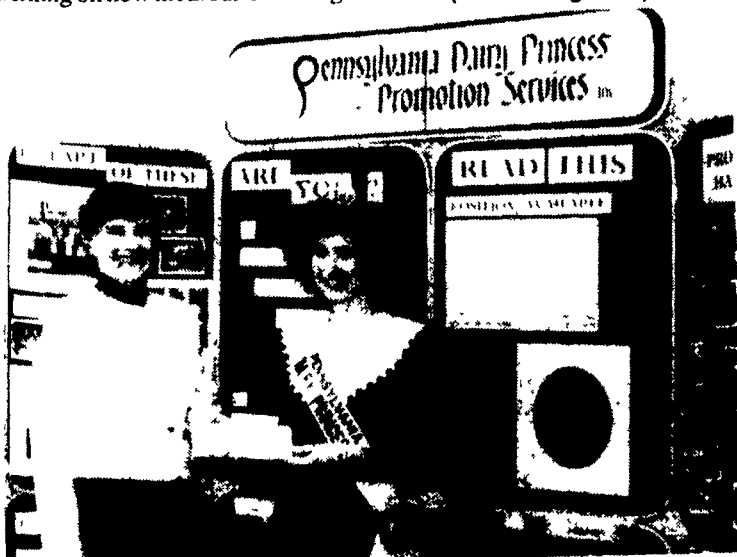
Approximately two-thirds of the cattlemen around the country are in favor of continuing the beef check-off. The bones of contention lay with dairy farmers who dislike the inequities they see. Primary among these is the dollar taken off dairy cows sold for dairy purposes.

"I think the beef promotion is good, I'm not against it," commented Jed Beshore, a dairy farmer from York County. "I'm

against the dollar check-off on dairy animals when they're sold for dairy purposes or sold overseas. I don't think that's fair." Currently under the '85 Farm Bill, all bovines are checked off when they are sold, regardless of whether it is for slaughter, produc-

tive purposes, or growing out. Another problem dairy farmers have with the beef check-off program is the dollar exacted on a veal calf every time it is sold. Farmers don't like paying the same amount for a 100-pound calf as for a

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Jan Harding, left, program chairman, and Becky Sonnen, state Dairy Princess, invite all eligible young ladies with a dairy farm background to enter the Dairy Princess Program. For more information and the name of each county chairperson, see "Lancaster Farming's" special color tribute section in this issue.



Yarsons, Apollo Chairman, consigned by Angel Syndicate, sold to Progressive Holstein Partnership of Sturgis, Michigan, for \$44,000. Angel sold with one pregnancy with recipient and two frozen embryos by Bridon Astro Jet-ET. See story Page A-27.