

## Computer Control Comes To The Pasteurization Process

BY LISA RISSER  
ROCK SPRINGS (Centre) — Within the next 10 years, 90 percent of milk plants in Pennsylvania will have magnetic-flow meter systems regulating their pasteurization process, predicted Tom Polchak, manager of Penn State's Creamery. "There are no more than five plants that currently have these systems," he remarked.

Polchak was on hand at the Theme Building during Ag Progress to discuss dairy processing with visitors.

The system has been around for years in the liquids industry. It pri-

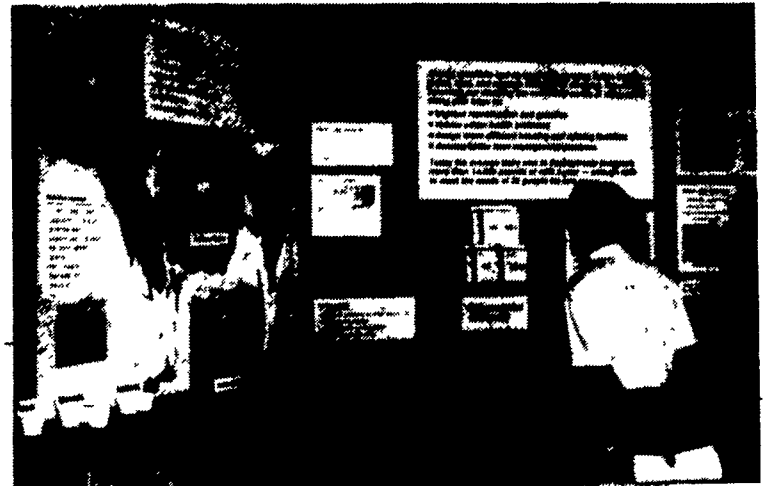
marily was used in processing oil, syrup, and sugar products. The university Creamery, which processes 125,000 gallons of milk yearly, received Food & Drug Administration approval in February to operate the system in their business.

The magnetic-flow meter system, or meter-based timing system, is more efficient than the timing pumps used now and controls the milk flow more easily. The timing pump uses positive displacement to regulate the flow of milk in the pasteurization process. It is a piece of equipment that needs regular preventative maintenance in addition to straight repairs.

The meter-based timing system uses an electronic pulse to control the speed of the milk. The user programs into the system how many total gallons the run will be and the meter speeds or slows the flow according to that figure," Polchak said.

Also on the horizon is the use of computer systems to control milk pasteurization. FDA recently approved their use as a replacement of the hard-wired controls currently in use.

"This is significant because the dairy industry is advancing technologically. They (industry members) can feel safe to incorporate it in dairy processing," Polchak said.



The Theme Building at Ag Progress featured a display with a video depicting how a cow's rumen works. Also there were displays on milk processing, crops and soils, and computers.

## Computers Becoming A Farming Tool

BY LISA RISSER  
ROCK SPRINGS (Centre) — For the farmer interested in computerizing his operations, George Greaser, ag economist at Penn State, recommends starting with an accounting system with a financial analysis program.

"This program gets the farmer's records up and makes all his

records available for analysis," said Greaser, who was in the Theme Building during Ag Progress. "Farmers traditionally aren't going to go through a stack of papers to compare data, whereas with the computer, they can access lots of information almost instantly."

The accounting program allows farmers to ask "what if" questions

by adjusting variables to determine if a course of action will earn money for them.

Once the farmer has this basic program, Greaser recommends obtaining production programs such as feed analysis and performance data on cattle.

Penn State's department of agriculture is compiling a list of sug-

gested software that they hope to have available to farmers soon.

The price of a good system is usually around \$2,400 plus about \$1,000 for software, according to Greaser. However, he and other computer experts predict that prices should drop dramatically this fall when Radio Shack introduces its newest computer. The newest Radio Shack entry into the computer market should run about \$1,400. This low price probably will cause IBM to drop the price on their System 2 computers to a comparable price.

"Once the farmer has a computer and telephone modem, he can hook into DHIA to access his herd information and Penn Pages, the university information system," said Greaser. "He'll have a lot of information at his fingertips."

In a separate building, the college of agriculture was offering a

free computer class to the public. The classes, led by Vince Verbeke, education specialist with the college, were designed to show the general public some of the things that computers can do. "It shows the public the technology involved with agriculture," said Verbeke. "The classes also help demystify computers."

This is the second year for the computer classes, which has been drawing people of all ages, from youngsters to senior citizens. Participants sit down in front of a MacIntosh computer and go through a series of exercises and learn several functions of the computer. Each person leaves the class with a sheet of paper on which he has blackened in his county on a state map and written in his name.

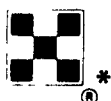
"It's amazing how fast they pick it up," said Verbeke. "They're having fun here."

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