

# Columbia DHIA Members Served Menu Of New Programs

**BY HELEN KELCHNER**  
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 ORANGEVILLE (Columbia)  
 — Columbia County DHIA members feasted on new DHIA programs as served up by Dick Barth, Pennsylvania's director of operations, at their annual meeting held at the Orangeville Masonic Lodge.

Barth recapped DHIA's 1988 accomplishments in new programs and services. Barth began with the Agricultural Records Information Service (ARIS) which allows users to access DHIA data on the main frame computer at State College.

Although the service was created with dairymen in mind, veterinarians have become the primary users. ARIS creators predict the service will continue to gain in popularity. It has already surpassed their expectations.

An example of its demand can be seen in the increasing membership use. From its inception in May to September, 150 members went 'on-line'. An additional 39 users joined in October, 1988.

Veterinarians can access ARIS to scan a dairy farm's records on health, pregnancy, nutrition, and other areas. Users, other than dairy farmers, must have prior approval of the farmer.

ARIS is also being tapped for somatic cell count information. After DairyLea visited the State College center during the summer, they accessed DHIA records to examine some DairyLea herds plagued with high SCC.

By screening the herds and determining where problems exist, a field representative can meet with the dairyman with facts in hand.

Barth went on to explain that unlike neighboring New York which has had a service similar to ARIS but with a fixed format, Pennsylvania's service can be written by the user. With ARIS dairy farmers can compose software to retrieve only the information they want.

Joe Lyons, state director from Columbia County, plans to go on-line this winter and invited interested members to attend an information session for a hands-on demonstration. The date will be announced.

### ARIS Fees

There is a one-time fee of \$95 which includes hook up, software and the services of an ARIS representative for one day and a \$5 monthly maintenance charge. Additional costs are based on time spent on line which uses telephone lines to access the main frame in State College. Those rates vary based on time of day it is used. Peak periods cost more and create delays. Off periods like late afternoon through the night until early morning are less costly.

Equipment compatible with IBM will work with ARIS. For those with equipment which is not IBM compatible, State College personnel can explain how usage can be made possible at a nominal fee.

### Nutrition Service

A second program being developed is in nutrition. DHIA's target date for this system is late December or early January, according to Barth. Barth emphasized that of all the management areas dairy farmers have to address and which have the highest pay-back for them, somatic cell management is number 1 and nutrition is number 2. Somatic cell management was introduced in May 1988.

To use the nutrition system the

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Roberta Bronson (from left) Columbia-Montour loan officer with the Farm Credit Corporation, present awards to Janet and Richard Kreibel for highest increase in milk pro-

duction. Jim Sternich receives the award for best somatic cell count from Dave Hartman, Columbia County Extension Agent. Jim accepted the award for his brother, John.

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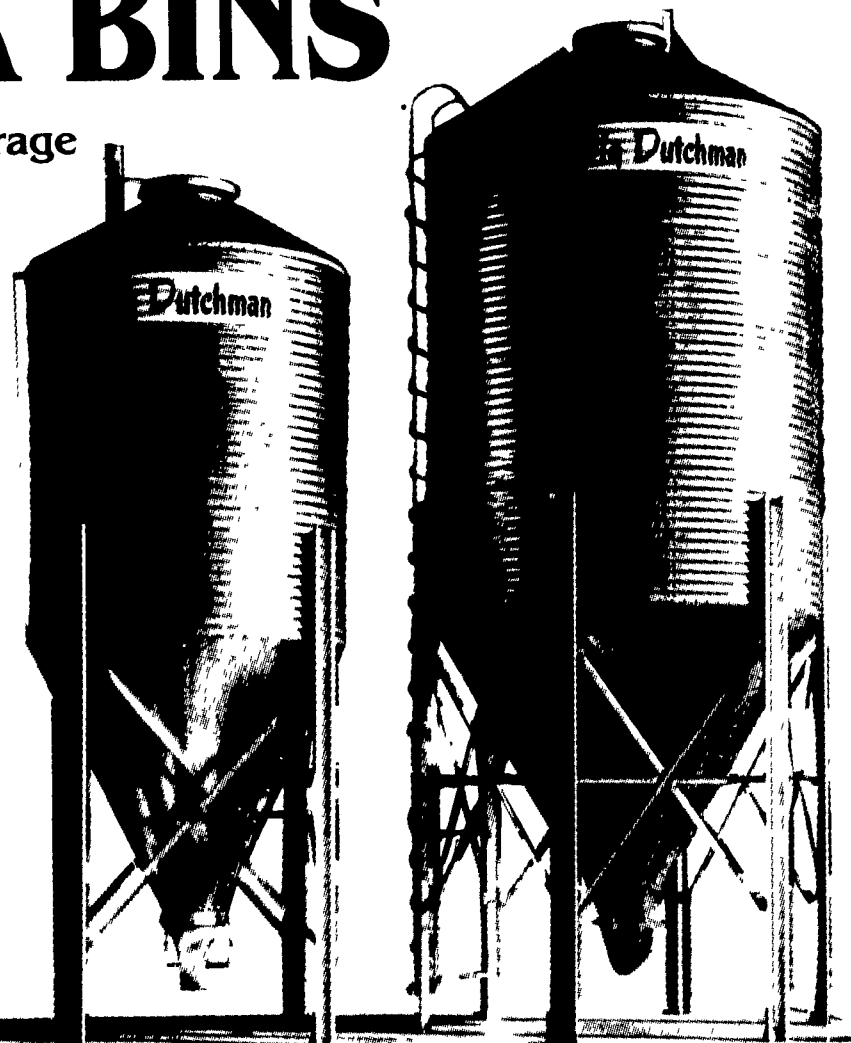
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