



OPINION

The Milk Kick

Milk may be America's health kick, but many people are in the dark when it comes to what's in it. According to a new Penn State study, a surprising number of consumers continue to be confused about how much fat is in the milk they drink.

In two phone surveys, 1,900 people were asked questions about changes in the foods they consume, including milk. In one part of the survey, respondents were asked to give the amount of fat in whole, low-fat and skim milk. The results showed that people really did not know the fat content of these different types of milk.

When respondents throughout the United States were asked to give the fat content of whole milk, two-thirds of the people answered that they did not know the amount, and 20 percent overestimated. Whole milk actually has a fat content of 3.25 percent. People in the surveys did better with low-fat milk, which is usually labeled as containing 1 or 2 percent milk fat. Forty percent of the survey respondents said they didn't know and 9 percent over-estimated. Skim milk - with less than .1 percent milk fat - is virtually fat free, but 60 percent of the respondents said they didn't know while 10 percent overestimated the amount of fat. When people in a separate Pennsylvania sample were questioned, their responses were similar.

The results seem to indicate that many people are making decisions about their milk consumption without specific information. This is especially surprising in the case of low-fat milk, which often has the amount of milk fat printed on the container.

The study was conducted to learn why people do or do not drink milk. Robert Herrmann, Blair Smith and Rex Warland, researchers in Penn State's Department of Rural Sociology and Agricultural Economics, coordinated the two phone surveys, one for the United States and one for Pennsylvania. Their primary purpose was to determine some of the attitudes and reasons why people have increased or decreased their milk consumption. The researchers' interest in the fat question was related. "Since concern about fat is believed to be one of the culprits in the decrease in milk consumption, we wanted to see if the public was aware of the facts," says Warland.

In both the United States and the Pennsylvania samples, many people said they have adjusted their diets because of health reasons. A large number of people reported they were cutting back on eggs, pork and beef while eating more fish, chicken, fruits and vegetables. But less than one-fourth of the respondents reported that they have changed the amount of milk they drink. For those who have changed, somewhat more have increased milk consumption than decreased it. Nationwide, 14 percent have increased the amount of milk they drink while 10 percent have decreased. The results for Pennsylvania were nearly identical.

Other responses also indicated that people are changing their diets for health reasons. Nearly half of those who had increased the amount of milk they drink cited calcium and other health reasons for drinking more milk. Health played a role in the decrease as well - the most frequent reasons given for drinking less milk included reducing calorie, fat and cholesterol intake. Taste figured in the amounts both increased and decreased, though taste was less significant than health concerns.

In the same study, many people who responded indicated they had decreased or increased certain types of food because of health reasons; yet few claimed they had changed the amount of milk they drink.

It's good to know that most people think of milk as healthful and not fat. A lot of credit for this positive public attitude toward milk must go to the dairy farmers who have spent hard-earned money on promotional efforts.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Aware Of Milker's Knee

Everyone knows about tennis elbow, but who has ever heard of "milker's knee"? Dairy producers may have this form of degenerative arthritis without being aware of it. The condition occurs from the squatting, bending and lifting that dairy farmers must do when attaching milkers to cows standing at floor level.

This wearing away of cartilage in the joints is most common among dairy farmers. The first sign is usually pain in the knees. Family and friends may notice that the person is becoming bowlegged. Other signs include frequent loss of balance; swelling, locking, stiffening, or giving out of the knees; and a grinding or snapping noise when bending.

A knee injury can develop into milker's knee but people who have never had a knee injury can be affected. Some farmers simply may have inherited the problem, especially if the family has a history of arthritis.

Dr. Dennis Murphy, Safety Specialist at Penn State, tells us that the most important preventive is to avoid squatting. Instead, kneel on one knee and wear knee pads. If you consult a physician at the first sign of trouble, you can probably keep the condition from becoming worse.

To Recognize Lime For Weed Control

You have never heard us recommend lime for weed control; however, indirectly lime is important to obtain good herbicide weed control. Both research and farm

20 and 27.

Penn State Forage Analysis Van, Delmont Agway, Westmoreland County, 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Columbia County Private Applicators Training, Bloomsburg Fairgrounds office, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Repeats at 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Columbia Montour Vo-Tech School.

Atlantic Breeders Annual Meeting, Cumberland County, Huntsdale Firehall, 7:30 p.m.

Pennsylvania Nurserymen & Allied Industry Conference, Hershey Conference Center, runs through Feb. 16.

Game Bird Production, PSU Keller Building, University Park; runs through Feb. 14.

Washington County, Md., Ag

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experience has indicated that herbicides are not as effective in sour soil. So, for best control with chemicals, the soil-test requirement must be satisfied.

Many poor weed control experiences have been reported on sour soils. A complete soil test will indicate the amount of lime needed. There are many other advantages to crop production in addition to better herbicide action.

To Be Aware That Cow's Nutrition Affects Calf's Survival

The nutritional status of a cow during her last three months of pregnancy can affect the vigor of her newborn calf and its ability to survive exposure to the cold conditions and calfhood diseases, according to Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent.

Researchers at the Colorado Agriculture Experiment Station showed that calves, born of dams that were deficient in protein during the last three months of pregnancy, produced less body heat during the first 12-24 hours following their birth. This affected their ability to withstand cold, wet conditions. To reduce this risk, feed calves additional energy and provide them with a clean, dry, draft-free place to rest during cold

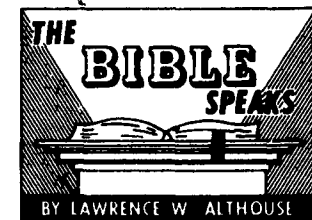
weather. Equally important is the cow's condition, or state of flesh, at time of calving. Cows that are either over-conditioned or under-conditioned generally have more problems at calving time. This stresses both the cow and her calf. Needless to say, proper nutrition for the pregnant cow is very important.

To Keep Small Children Away From Machinery

The spring cropping season will be starting in another month. That means that a lot of farm machines will be put into operation and things will really be moving. Small children like to become a part of this action and ask to ride on machinery, or even operate some of the smaller tractors. It might take nerve to refuse them at times; however, for their own protection they should not become involved. Many serious accidents have happened because "Dad" or "Grandad" took them along.

Where there are small children, all machinery operators should be especially careful of their exact location. Farm machinery and small children do not mix.

The Penn State Cooperative Extension is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution.



**UNCLEAN!
UNCLEAN!**
February 12, 1989

Background Scripture:

Leviticus 13: 9-17, 45-46; Luke 17:11-19.

Devotional Reading:

Psalms 105: 1-5.

That's what a leper was commanded by Mosaic law to call whenever he or she was in the proximity of other people. "Unclean! Unclean! Be careful not to come near to me so that you will be contaminated!" Although this might appear as an appropriate health measure to prevent the spread of the disease, that was not the purpose of the Mosaic law. A person with leprosy — and people with other physical conditions including childbirth — was thought to be spiritually unclean and anyone who associated with people such as this were likely to become spiritually contaminated themselves.

The Mosaic law also proscribed that the leper "shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip..." (Leviticus 13:45). Furthermore, "he shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp" (13:46). No law-abiding Jew was to have any contact or relationship with these people.

HEALED

AS THEY WENT

So, you can better appreciate

the importance of Jesus' encounter with the ten lepers on his way to Jerusalem via Samaria. On the one hand, these ten lepers went strictly by the law, for as Luke tells us, they "stood at a distance and lifted up their voices..." (Luke 17:11). On the other hand, however, they dared to challenge the system in asking Jesus to heal them. They knew that in doing so, he himself would be likely regarded as "unclean" by the religious authorities. It is interesting that Luke doesn't say Jesus touched them or even spoke of healing. He simply told them to present themselves to the priests in the temple and "as they went they were cleansed" (17:14).

This incident with the ten lepers may seem to have little relevance to us, in as much as leprosy is not much of a factor in our daily lives. But the story is relevant, because we all know our share of people who are "lepers" in the figurative sense. "Untouchables" are no less a problem to us than they were to the people in Jesus' day. There are people whom we may regard as "unclean," if for other reasons.

THIS FOREIGNER

Who are these people? They are the people we regard and treat as outcasts. Because they are old, because they are handicapped in some way, because they are strange to us, we pass by on the other side, if we can. Yet, in the story, Jesus showed that the persons most respondent to God's grace are not those who are seemingly beyond reproach, but the social lepers and religious samaritans who demonstrate in some way that they are closer to Christ than we are.

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Farm Calendar



Saturday, February 11

Cumberland County Holstein Meeting, Penn Township Fire Hall, Huntsdale, 10:45 a.m.

Butler County Annual Meeting, Meridian United Presbyterian Church, Butler, noon.

Monday, February 13

Lebanon/Dauphin Crops Days, Palmyra Fire Hall, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Adams County Dairy Nutrition School, Cross Keys Diner, New Oxford, 9:45 a.m. Repeats Feb.

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