

Compared On Foreign Tour

U.S. Skimmed milk powder is distributed among the European Community (EC) countries.

The group toured Avonmore's milk processing plant in Ballyragget near Kilkenny which is the largest and most modern single processing plant in western Europe. It is owned by Avonmore cooperative's 11,000 shareholders. There are about 4,800 suppliers producing 140 million gallons of milk (Imperial gallon = 10 lbs.) or 1.4 billion lbs. annually.

Avonmore Foods, PLC (Public Limited Corp.) is a large multipurpose agribusiness with an annual turnover of 300 million pounds (\$450 million). The dairy processing sector contributes about half of this annual figure. The remainder comes from its animal feed and fertilizer—they sell more fertilizer than any other organization in Ireland. They also have 46 retail branches, are developing a meat business, and hold shares in many other businesses, from insurance to oil distribution. The milk processing division now handles over 122 million gallons of milk and 80 million gallons of whey each year with a peak processing capacity in excess of 700,000 gallons of milk and 500,000 gallons of whey each day.

The 10-acre plant manufactures cheese; butter and dairyspreads; casein and caseinate; and milk powders. Because of the seasonal unevenness of Irish milk production, the large Avonmore processing plant closes in November for about 12 weeks while channeling milk intake to a smaller plant. This saves labor and other operating costs.

The highest amount of milk is produced in May and June. Avonmore has "peak week" about the 3rd week of May when deliveries are 550,000 gallons/day. At this time about 300 additional seasonal workers are added to the usual 1400 employees; they are on three shifts. Surplus milk is sent by ferry to Scotland for processing, all within 36 hours.

Farmers are offered premiums

for winter milk; but some farmers prefer to ease up around Christmas, so they dry off their cows to avoid having to pay higher feed costs during these winter months before the grazing comes in around March.

Because of the EC quota, the Ballyragget plant has had their input reduced over the past five

years by about 14 million gallons (10%), which is one of the major reasons why Avonmore recently wanted to purchase the smaller Westmeath Coop. with about 13.5 million gallons of (quota) milk production/year. But they faced a private competitor, Food Industries—a giant in the meat industry—who outbid Avonmore. When Westmeath Coop. members

voted, the results (55% to 45%) put the cooperative into private hands, which has put the future of the cooperative movement into question.

One important change at Avonmore is the reduction in making butter and the partial conversion to dairyspread manufacture. In 1984, Avonmore was making 140 tons of butter per day; five years

later the plant is down to 90 tons of butter each day with these new products added: Avonmore Light Dairyspread, low fat dairyspread, and Golden Spread, a blend of butter and dairyspread. Butter is manufactured in 1/2 and 1 lb. packages and bulk packages of 25 kg. (55 lbs.)

Continued Next Week

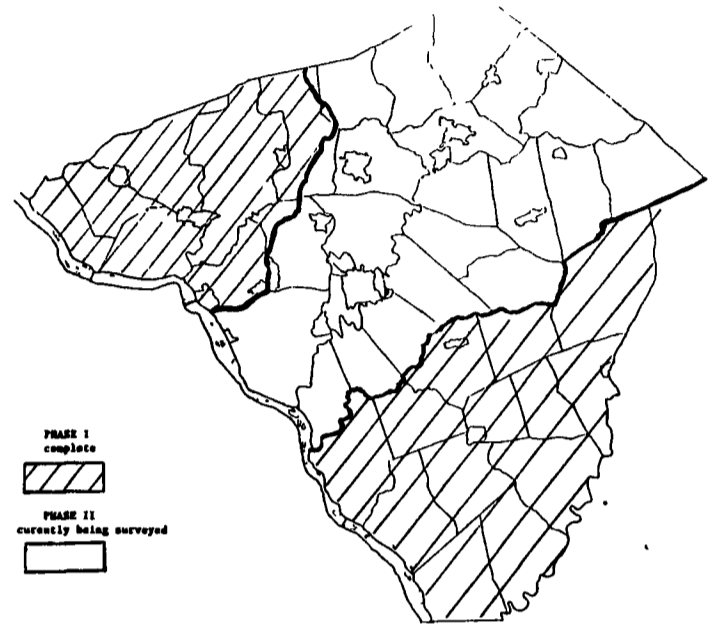
Nutrient Management Surveys Conducted In Conestoga Watershed

LANCASTER — The Lancaster Conservation District has begun conducting nutrient-management farm surveys in the Conestoga Watershed. The Conestoga Watershed area includes the north-east quarter of the county, plus all townships surrounding Lancaster City. The Conservation District already has subcontracted interviewers to collect information in the 20 townships of the Conestoga Watershed in May when weather does not permit corn planting, and throughout June. More than 600 farmers will be contacted for information related to water quality, and as to how they manage their manure and fertilizer applications.

The purpose of the survey is to get a better picture of nutrient balances based on manure in the various townships. The same information was collected in the other watersheds of Lancaster County for the Chesapeake Bay Assessment Project. In the Phase I report completed at the request of the Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority, it was found that there are a number of townships which do not have serious manure problems when the nutrient balance is based solely on the available manure nitrogen. The District is interested in seeing whether manure is a serious problem in any of the townships within the Conestoga Watershed. In 1982

the Lancaster Conservation District completed a "208 assessment" study that gave an idea of the magnitude of agricultural non-point source pollution. Unfortunately, the questionnaire used at that time did not gather all the information needed to make the detailed nutrient management calculations. With the increased emphasis on water quality, we can no longer generalize to come up with practical solutions. We need to know how various farmers manage their manure, and how the crops use the nutrients of the applied manure. Once we have the information and do the calculations for a representative sample of farms, we will have a better idea of whether a specific township has a serious problem with excess manure.

Approximately 20 percent of the farmers will be contacted in each township. Manor Township feels this type of study is important enough to justify having information collected for all farms in their township. The schedule shows that all field surveys are to be completed by the end of June, so the computer work can be done in time for the report to be released by the end of July. Anyone interested in obtaining more information about this survey should contact Gerald Heistand of the Lancaster County Conservation District at 299-5361.



The Lancaster County Conservation District has begun interviewing farmers in the Conestoga Watershed on their nutrient management practices. This is the second phase in a project initiated by the Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority.

Thompson Bull Acquired By Landmark Genetics

HUGHSON, CA — Fountain-Farm Queens RALPH-et, Reg. #2047227, a young Holstein bull bred by Harry E. & Aliene Thompson, Carlisle, has been selected for sampling in the young

sire proving program of Landmark Genetics. His semen has just been released for use in herds on official DHIA test throughout the United States.

As a member of Landmark Genetics' "GO" (Genetic Opportunity) program, RALPH is undergoing thorough testing. He has successfully passed his health tests and the goal now is to get a minimum of 50 daughters milking in 40 herds across the U.S. for a high repeatability on his first proof.

Kevin Carhart, Regional Sire Analyst for the International, artificial breeding company, said, "We've selected this youngster because of his outstanding bloodlines."

RALPH is a son of Rotate, a sire known for big, rough, hard-working, high testing daughters, with wide muzzles and rumps.

RALPH's Excellent 92 point 2E dam has two records over 28,000M and two records over 1,000 Fat. RALPH's two exceptionally fine uddered dams are both Excellent in the Mammary.

RALPH's grandam is a big, fine 93 point 3E daughter of Jet Stream with four records over 22,500M and 800F. Her dam is a really fine 89 point Elevation daughter with lifetime credits of 109,520M 4.3% and 4,718F.

With the size, quality and udders of this maternal line you can expect RALPH to work hard to improve strength, stature, width and milk yield.

Semen from RALPH, according to Kevin Carhart, will be available for sampling in the "GO" herd program for the next 60 to 90 days.



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