

New Dairy Promotion Strategy For The '90s

BY PAT PURCELL

WILLOW STREET (Lancaster Co.) — "We are working together, trusting one another and sharing the same agenda to prevent the duplication of efforts through the coordination of dairy promotion programs," said Cynthia Carson speaking at the annual meeting of the Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association (MAMMA) held earlier this week in southern Lancaster County.

Carson, Chief Executive Officer of the National Dairy Board since January of this year, speaking of the newly formed Strategic Marketing Alliance (SMA), said, "The alliance has already pulled together the dairy industry which will increase the power around each organization to assure us that we get the most out of each marketing dollar."

The SMA is the union of dairy promotion groups to determine the best strategy to narrow the gap between dairy production and dairy product consumption.

"The dairy industry is in transition from being a commodity driven industry to a market driven industry," said Carson. "I understand that the dairy industry cannot be completely market driven because we do have a product. However, we need to focus our efforts on how we can best find markets for our product and which of our products can best accommodate the needs of the consumer."

"We must understand consumer attitudes towards dairy products. Our consumer testing has told us that with consumers fat is now equal to salt as the top nutritional concern," explained Carson. "It is important to be market oriented



Jim Click (left) accepts MAMMA's recognition award for Walter Martz the former General Manager for Md. and Va. Milk Producers Association. Robert McSparran, (right) MAMMA Chairman, made the presentation at MAMMA's annual meeting.

and to understand what trends are developing."

There may be some change in the structure of dairy promotion programs down the line, according to Carson and one thing industry members can be sure of is that dairy promotion in the '90's will be much different than what anyone has seen in the 80's.

Carson was asked, with the rising costs of advertising, if the 15 cents contribution might be increased.

In reply, Carson said, "I think it's best we concentrate on the 15 cents we have now and find ways in which we can most effectively use that. We need to work together to find the most efficient use of our funds on hand."

MAMMA honored three industry members for their dedication

and support of MAMMA and the dairy farmers of the Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association:

—James R. Barnett, Atlantic Dairy Cooperative Members Relations Manager;

—Walter A. Martz, Former Chairman, Vice Chairman, Executive Committee member and board member of MAMMA. Martz sits on the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board and is a member of the Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Association. (Award was accepted by Jim Click, former General Manager for Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers.)

—Lyle C. Tabb, former MAMMA Board of Director and former Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Association.



Robert McSparran, (right) MAMMA Chairman, presents Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Tab (left) with an appreciation award for their service to MAMMA and to the dairy farmers of the Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Area.



James Barnett, (left) Atlantic Dairy Cooperative Members Relations Manager, accepts an award from MAMMA Chairman, Robert McSparran (right) for his years of service to MAMMA and to dairy farmers in the mid-atlantic region.

Strause Named Beef Representative

BY VAL VANTASSEL
Berks Co. Correspondent

HAMBURG (Berks Co.) — The Berks County Cattleman's Association celebrated two firsts on October 20 at R. John's Olde Haus Restaurant. For the first time in the group's seven-year history they held a banquet meeting and they chose their first beef industry representative.

Alice Strauss, daughter of Harold and Marie Strauss, Hamburg R.D. 2, will help the association promote beef during in-store demonstrations the local fairs and festivals for the next year.

Alice, a sophomore at Hamburg Area High School, is the president and an eight-year member of the Berks 4-H Beef Club. She also belongs to the 4-H sheep and swine clubs and recently joined the Hamburg Area FFA. For the last three years she has had the reserve champion at the 4-H Beef Roundup and this year exhibited the grand champion market steer at the Oley Fair. Strauss hopes to enter the medical field while continuing to farm on the side.

Gerry Gammel, Womelsdorf, will be serving as Strauss' advisor.

After a delicious dinner featuring prime rib, 40 association members in attendance got some good news from Pennsylvania Cattleman president Glenn Eberly. "Did you know that lean beef has about the same level of cholesterol as skinless chicken? Chicken with the skin on has more cholesterol than beef!"

Eberly stated that the beef industry has a public relations problem. "Very few people are aware of that fact. Make a guess

on whether there are more beef or dairy cattle in the state of Pennsylvania. The right answer is beef. Many are in small herds of say five or ten. Because they're in such little groups people don't think about them. We need to let consumers know this information."

Animal rights is a hot issue according to Eberly. "We need to educate people on our side of the animal rights issue. The general public needs to know that we are taking care of our animals. After all if you don't take care of your animals they won't take care of you."

"The veal industry has a real image problem," Eberly stated. "We need to have a unified effort in this area. Some terribly restrictive laws have been proposed in this country. Legislators tend to listen better to organizations than to individuals so we need to work on these issues together."

Eberly also has been relatively pleased with the beef advertising that has been appearing. "The beef checkoff has been god sent. We have been using the money to help educate people about the importance of beef and to dispel the fallacies that surround it. Some folks questioned the use of stars like James Garner and Cybil Shepard in our T.V. commercials because of their expense. And it's true that they were expensive. But I feel they were effective. Before the commercials we found that people weren't ordering beef when dining out. It was more fashionable to order salad bars or sushi or some such thing. After the commercials, beef seemed to come back in style.

I can't say beef consumption is back where it was years ago but we've stopped the slide."

Eberly offered farmers an opportunity to do a little promoting of their own. The Pennsylvania Beef Council is offering beef signs including farm names to folks at a discount price. The signs are a mild yellow and include the logo "Real Food for Real People." It costs \$20,000 to \$30,000 for billboards that are up for 30 days. The 4x8-foot signs cost \$75 and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Beef Council at (717) 545-6000.

Eberly also told the Berks farmers about the proposed Pennsylvania Beef Expo scheduled for March 28 and April 1, 1990. "The expo will include educational programs and a trade show. We are working on a medieval fair to show how beef has progressed from the middle ages to the present. The expo will also feature seminars for farmers."

The trade show is getting a lot of response. Rather than taking their exhibits to several events through the summer, people will be able to reach beef farmers by exhibiting at just one event.

Eberly concluded his presentation by reminding the cattlemen that the state organization is interested in their views. "Ours is a grassroots organization. We want and need your input."

President Sheila Miller conducted a short business meeting including the election of four members to the board of directors. Elected for three-year terms were Paul Holcombe, April Moll, and Bill Weist. Charles Nehf will be serving a one-year term.



Alice Strause was selected as Berks County Beef Industry Representative. Sheila Miller, president of the County Beef Association, and Glenn Eberly, president of the Pennsylvania Cattleman's Association congratulated her at the association's first banquet held October 21.



The Berks County Cattleman's Association held their first banquet on October 21. Among their activities was the election of board directors. They include (left to right) Geri Gammel, Mike Firestone, Sheila Miller, April Moll and Paul Holcombe.