

## Sire Power Gains Strength

**VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff

**NEW CUMBERLAND** (Cumberland Co.) — The past year has seen a financial turn-around for the East Coast dairymen cooperative, Sire Power Inc., according to officials.

Following a devastating 1987-88 fiscal year, in which the bull semen processing operation saw its first loss, officials report a 1988-1989 rebound of some \$1.3 million dollars in sales. The year ended with a net income of \$427,459. The previous year, the company had shown a net deficit of \$273,757.

Sire Power Board President Gary Rickard said the turn-around is directly attributable to two changes in business; reducing the amount of surplus inventory and a large increase in overseas sales. Furthermore, expense only rose .025 percent, keeping the profit margin in the black.

Rickard said that, while the financial turnaround should be applauded, "... we need to be concerned to a degree..." about the heavy reliance on sales

overseas.

Adding to his concern, Rickard said sales within the four-state Sire Power membership area diminished 3.5 percent. Overseas sales increased 19 percent. Rickard said members should be concerned about the ever-decreasing cow population within the United States which would directly affect demand for the semen.

Rickard also cautioned that, while overseas sales were good last year and brought the cooperative out of the red, depending too much on a potentially-unstable foreign market to maintain a cost-effective operation could result in trouble. Especially, he said, if trade relations, political changes, or dairy cattle improvements overseas, decrease demand for American bull genetics.

According to figures provided, part of the reason for the loss of income in the previous year was due to overprocessing of semen in relation to sales. This past year, management emphasis was placed on trying to more closely match supply with demand; thus, the overall number of semen units processed was down, but the number

of units sold broke records, official said.

Also shown was a decrease in the number of first-time services and an increase in follow-up service.

Rickard said that earlier projections that foreign sales would probably decrease soon have change toward optimism. "With changes in communist bloc countries, (foreign sale are) not as certain to decrease," he said. "It will take awhile to develop those markets."

Also announced was the startup of a computerized cow-mating service that officials said "without a doubt" will revolutionize breeding programs.

According to Dwayne Kutz, manager of Sire Power, specifications of about 36,000 cows are included on the computer program already. Two-thirds of the cows are now being done with computer mating.

Sales and service representatives said the program works by working out each dairyman's requirements for his herd and with the computer information on each of the cows, matching up suitable



Sire Power Inc. President Gary Rickard (right) presents a plaque of appreciation to outgoing director Marlin Hoff.

bull semen to turn the future herd into what each dairyman requires.

In other business, the board of directors was confirmed by membership. All except one director has retained a seat. Directors are: Gary Rickard; Stanly Dunn Jr., West Virginia; William Terhune, of New Jersey; Richard Remsburg, of Maryland; John Epler, North

Umberland; Frank Gromlich, Hamburg; Clifford Sands, Tunkhannock; Ralph Shank Sr., Hagerstown, Md.; and newly-appointed Arthur Rhoderick, of Maryland.

Rhoderick replaced Marlin Hoff, who resigned his position because of a scheduling conflict with a position he has with the Holstein Association.

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### ANIMAL RIGHTISTS HIT PENNSYLVANIA FAIRS

Pennsylvania and New Jersey producer William Gostkowski reported to the American Sheep Industry Association that animal rights advocates approached youngsters at county fairs in that area with anti livestock materials and photographs. "They dispersed and talked to children about raising animals for slaughter, telling

them they should keep their sheep as pets," he said. To combat the negative impact, producers talked to the 4-H members about realistic aspects of livestock production practices and benefits to the American public. This year, Gostkowski said, they are planning ahead to provide educational displays on production for the general public and will prepare their young 4-H members in advance to avoid negative reaction.

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