

Dairy of Distinction Program Growing

WILLIAMSPORT — Pennsylvania Dairy of Distinction representatives met at the Farm Show to discuss plans for its fourth year of award designation to producers.

The meeting included elections for the 1990 slate of officers. Elected president was Dan Baker taking the program reigns from Everett Newswanger, founding president who stepped down from the position.

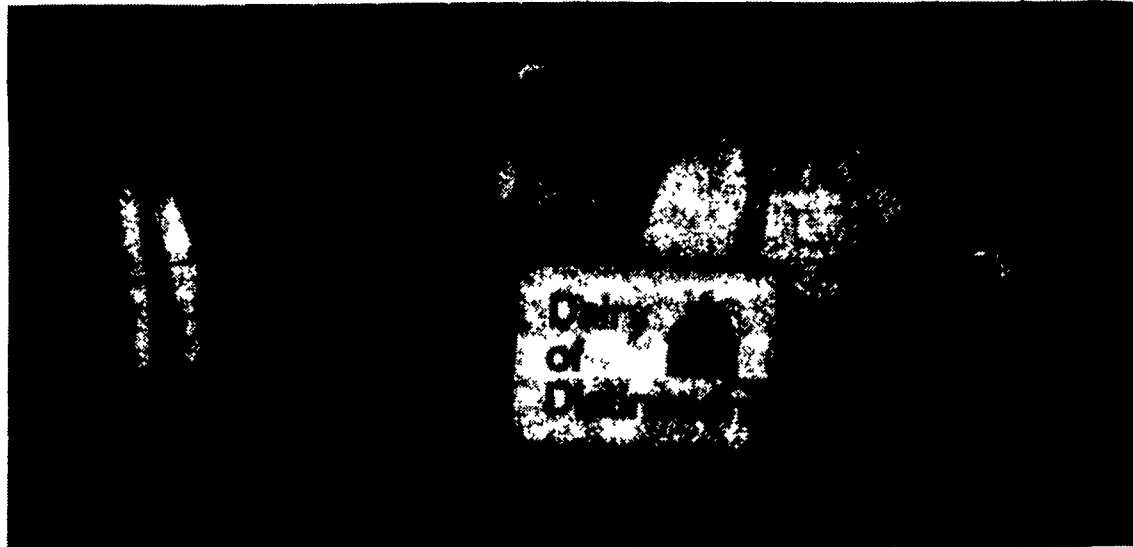
"The Dairy of Distinction program is extremely beneficial to the entire industry," Newswanger said. "We are providing producers with recognition for maintaining attractive production sites. So doing, we also present a clean and healthful environment to passing consumers."

The environment is just one issue that the program has become more sensitive to. The Pennsylvania

Dairy of Distinction program recently initiated a quality control program to ensure that both high quality milk and attractive surroundings are the award recipient's objectives.

Another emphasis has been program funding and leadership. Presently, primary sponsors are the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council (ADADC), and the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program.

Baker, noted, "In the past, leadership and organization has come from the promotional agencies and a few industry or producer representatives. Today, we are striving to better utilize the program's resources, particularly past winners. These producers obviously have an interest in the program. Their insight and involvement is what we are looking for."



The newly-elected officers of the Dairy of Distinction program are, from left, Steve Spencer, advisor; Donna Gearhart, treasurer; Russ Rooks, vice president; Dan Baker, president; and Paul Nichols, secretary. Everett Newswanger (not shown), president since the program came into Pennsylvania four years ago, has retired his post, but remains on the board of directors.

Dairy of Distinction Application

Please Print

Farm Name/Owner/Operator: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ County: _____ Town: _____

Cooperative or Dealer-Handler Name: _____

Address: _____

Location (driving directions for judging team): _____

I hereby apply to the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee to have my dairy scored in accordance with the rules of the program for the purpose of obtaining a Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed on my premises. (No producer will be charged with scoring or sign expense.)

Signature of Owner or Operator

Other newly-elected officers include Russel Brooks, vice president, and Steve Spencer from Penn State, as advisor. Retaining positions are Paul Nichols, ADADC, secretary and Donna Gearhart, Blair County, treasurer. The Pennsylvania program has grown rapidly, with nearly 300 recipients so far. Dairy farms are judged on the roadside appearance of buildings, grounds and surroundings. Judging will be con-

ducted early May. Winning farms will be rejudged every year to ensure they maintain the standards of excellence required for the award.

Information and applications can be obtained by contacting program secretary Paul Nichols, ADADC, 1853 E. Third Street, Williamsport, 17701. The 1990 deadline for applications is April 15.

NFO Calls For Collective Action To Raise Milk Price

CORNING IOWA — "The 99-cent price drop in the January Minn.-Wis. Series price, which was announced Feb. 5, is unwarranted, based on milk, cheese and butter inventories in the United States," National Farmers Organization President DeVon Woodland has said.

Woodland said, industry officials have been predicting lower milk prices by spring, even though no one has been able to justify lower prices with either increased production or decreased consumption.

"In fact, no supplies — other than butter and minimal amounts of dry milk powder — remain in government storage. Production continues at year-ago levels while consumption continues to increase. Milk is a much sought-after commodity now among dairy processors," Woodland said.

Woodland called on dairy producers nationwide to participate in the National Farmers Organization's "Enough Is Enough" program, whereby producers block their production in sufficient numbers to negotiate higher prices from handlers.

"Yet, Milk Industry Foundation leaders, at a conference in January, indicated they would have prices 'under control' in the near future and the National Cheese Exchange has lowered barrel cheese prices by about 30.5 cents per pound in the past month. If handlers are allowed to decrease the price of milk accordingly, dairy farmers could see a \$3.00/cwt. drop in milk prices by April," he said.

"By utilizing this program during the past year," Woodland said, "producers have made significant strides in raising the incomes of dairy producers. A more earnest effort is now needed to combat this negative pressure."

Woodland questioned who is responsible for the cut in dairy producers' income. "We need to realize that not only do we have a governmental

Woodland added that NFO producers are also participating in cull cow movements to decrease dairy production availability in the marketplace. From Dec. 26-Feb. 7, the National Farmers Organization sold an extra 75 semi-loads of producing cows, or approximately 43.8 million pounds of annual milk production, through NFO's collection points. That effort is being continued, to stop the current negative market psychology in the dairy industry.

PFA Reacts To Casey Budget Proposal

VERNON ACHENBACH JR. Lancaster Farming Staff CAMP HILL (Dauphin Co.) — Officials with the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association are critical of state Gov. Robert Casey's recently-issued, \$22.4 billion budget proposal.

"We recognize there are not great windfalls in this austere budget, but dropping back or no increase at all for key programs needs to be re-examined," Newpher said.

Touted as a no-tax increase budget, Casey's budget contains increases for education, fighting drugs and human service programs, but cuts funds for the state Department of Agriculture and related programs, according to published reports.

According to Newpher, the department of agriculture is targeted for a \$500,000 cut toward research. Another \$1.5 million, that had just been allocated last year to Penn State University for research, is also on the list for cuts.

The general fund budget proposal, which is derived from taxes, is set at \$12.3 billion, and the \$1.6 billion for transportation includes an all-time high for highway maintenance at \$690 million, according to a newspaper report.

"We are concerned about no increase for inflation or new programs, on a number of budgetary items in the department of agriculture," Newpher said. "Many of these items are on the leading edge of consumer protection, such as Brucellosis vaccination for cattle, rabies control and animal health surveillance."

The administrative secretary of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) called the Casey proposal "of major concern."

"The School of Veterinary Medicine, the only one in the state, received absolutely no increase. It can't continue to operate efficiently under these budget proposals," Newpher said.

Richard W. Newpher, administrative secretary of PFA, said in a statement, "Decreases for overall agricultural research and significant cuts in the funding of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board activities are of major concern to the agricultural community."

According to Newpher, the Penn State University Extension Service has been given new and expanded responsibilities recently, but Casey's proposed \$600,000 to finance those programs will not

cover costs.

Further, Newpher said that Casey is playing with funding of the state milk marketing board.

"The 'shell game' being played with the appropriations going to the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB) is making a sham of early discussions about the need to increase licensing fees."

"This past year, we supported increased licensing fees for milk dealers and milk haulers to the tune of \$300,000 to cover increased operating costs. Now, the new budget proposal slashed the general funds monies going to the PMMB by that same amount. We supported the licensing fee increase because it was needed," Newpher said, adding that with this proposal, the PMMB will be back where it started.

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"The dairy price drops can be reversed," Woodland said. "Dairy producers can take control of their markets and set their prices through collective action."