

National DHIA

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What looks like something from a movie producer's creative mind is a workable proto-type that will be marketed in the US in the next two to five years. The University of Maryland has been designated as the US research facility to continue the development of the machine into a practical product.

Rick VanRinsum, Gascoigne Melotte, said his company's main objective is to create systems that will be able to do automatically the repetitive things that happen on a dairy farm.

No one in the audience seemed to question that the process of attaching milking machines to a herd of dairy cows every morning and evening was repetitive. But some farmers were not sure the docile aged cow in the video was representative of the species. One man pointed out that the things that go on between a first-calf heifer's back legs may cause a different reaction.

"I can just see one of my heifers kick \$50,000 damage out of that robot the first time through," he said.

Another farmer thought the system was made for people like this editor who wanted to keep a job in town and have a herd of cows in his back yard.

But the company expects to have real-farm systems available within two to five years. And after this new idea sank into one farmer's thinking, and he contemplated the possibility he may some day be able to stay in bed Sunday morning while the robot did the milking, he said, "You never know, it may work."

WISCONSIN'S NEW BAR CODE SYSTEM

From Wisconsin, Pete Giacomini told how their DHIA was ready to implement a hand-held data unit into their regular testing program. This unit records bar codes and matches each cow with her records and each sample vile cap with the computer link in the testing laboratory. As the milk samples move through the testing system, the bar coded vial lids are automatically removed and read by a bar code scanner. This information is run together with the information from the on-farm hand-held unit. All the information comes together by computer and the farm reports are quickly provided.

"The major usefulness in the new system is the identification of individual milk samples," Giacomini said. "The decrease in paper work, along with increased accuracy and speed will help the new system pay for itself."

Thirty herds are now on the system and another 600 herds are ready to go on next month. A complete turn over to the system will be phased in this summer.

PARASITES

Terry Skogerboe, DVM, Pfizer, discussed deworming practices and listed the life cycle of common internal cattle parasites as follows:

Grazing cattle ingest infective-stage parasite larvae with grass. The adult worms inhabit the gastrointestinal tract and eggs are passed out in the feces onto the pasture. These eggs hatch and develop in the feces and migrate onto the grass. The grazing cattle ingest the larvae and the life cycle of the parasite continues. This cycle has a tremendous potential for infection and reinfection throughout the grazing period.

Skogerboe said the goal for treatment was to prevent or limit the parasites' contact with the host animal by eliminating the adult worms in the animal before they are turned out to graze. In addition, the cows should be wormed at calving and in the fall to eliminate parasites that have been picked up through the grazing season. The trade-marked Rumatel product was recommended as a safe-effective way to deal with the parasite problem and defeat the economic liabilities of parasitism.

TECHNOLOGY

Lew Parker, ProScience, said that within the last few years, technology has been developed to detect very small quantities of substances. "One drop of antibiotics in the swimming pool of 30,000 gal. could be detected," Parker said. "And we could tell you what kind and how much was there. An error with one cow can cause a detectable residue in the pool of milk from 70,000 cows."

"Fortunately for the dairy producer, the same technology is there to help him as well as regulate him. DHIA is in perfect position to deliver these techniques to the dairyman. With 2000 supervisors and 54 labs across the country, no one else has the capability to analyze samples like DHIA."

CEO REPORT

Frank Dickinson, chief executive officer, said the organization was and always will be run in a business-like manner, following the direction of the elected delegates. He said trends show a continuing long-term gain in market share seems to be one of the main signs of a successful state or regional DHIA.

Dickinson said the quality certification service procedures were up-dated and informational data bases were established for the central labs. DHIA Services, an arm of the national association, established the Staph Aureus test that positioned National DHIA to provide new technology to the entire dairy industry.

"DHIA has the unique capability to analyze high numbers of milk samples," Dickinson said. "We have an unmatched, nation-wide network of employees, transportation and communications. We have the ability to analyze and provide information for virtually all dairymen in the country."



National DHIA Directors in Greensboro, NC, this week are (l to r): Front. Michael Quesnell, Twin Falls, ID, vice president; Robert Kindig, Conestoga, PA, president; John Noble, Linwood, NY, secretary; H.L. Hill, Lexington, NC. Center, Tom Sammon, Faribault, MN; David Watkins, Moscow, IA; Terry Ellingson, Poplar Grove, IL; Ken Beswick, Turlock, CA. Back, Donald Long, executive committee, Weyauwega, WI; Dick Scott, Norridgewock, ME; Doug Runyon, treasurer, Kopperl, TX.

KINDIG LISTS OBJECTIVES

President Robert Kindig said the people who established National DHIA 25 years ago, had foresight and should be proud of what has been accomplished. "We find ourselves benefiting from these years of progress," Kindig said. "And now we find ourselves at the threshold of a new decade."

Kindig listed ten objectives for

the National DHIA operations in the 90's.

- * Assist state DHIA's to increase their market share.
- * Insure more efficient ways to collect on-farm records.
- * Insure state DHIA's increase the quality of their internal operations.
- * Provide leadership in identification, analyzation and promotion

of new dairy technology.

- * Insure high quality information to farmers.
- * Represent DHIA among other organizations, nationally and internationally.
- * Sponsor selective high-value educational programs to state DHIA's.
- * Communicate with member

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