

FOCUS

Pennsylvania
Dairy Herd
Improvement Association

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Sleeping On the Job

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General Manager
Pennsylvania DHIA

"There were hundreds, probably thousands," my wife said to me. "Thousands of what," I asked. "Geese. Last night, about 1:30 a.m. Didn't you hear them?" "No," I said. "I was sleeping." "They made a terrific honking noise," she said. "Even though you couldn't see them you could tell they were there. I can't believe you didn't hear them."

What she said got me thinking. I'm usually a light sleeper and I hear even the smallest noises in the house at night. But I didn't hear those noisy geese, and it bothered me. After all, I would have heard them if I had been awake.

But I was asleep, as anybody ought to be that time of day! -- and that was the problem. I missed the geese, thousands of them, because I was asleep.

There were 51, and most people didn't see them either.

Those that missed them were asleep, like I was with the geese.

Also missed was the fact that they cost DHIA members \$5,000 apiece to replace them.

Let's see, that's \$5,000 times 51, or \$255,000. A big chunk of money.

What are the 51? DHIA supervisors.

The most important asset the association has and we lost about that many statewide in 1989.

Some retired, but most quit outright. There were 51 replacements hired, each costing \$5,000 to recruit and train.

And amazing as it may seem, by January 1, 1990 eleven of those new hires had quit. They didn't even make it a year on the job.

Three Reasons For Leaving

Why do supervisors leave DHIA?

They tell us because of poor pay, poor working conditions and

lack of opportunity for advancement.

Those with ambition realize soon after hire that there is no structure for promotional opportunities and they are in a dead-end position. So they look for greater pastures elsewhere.

If they really want to earn a good income, they start breeding cows for a living because the average income for an A.I. technician

is about \$10,000 per year higher than the average income for a DHIA supervisor in Pennsylvania.

Fifty-one out of 246 total supervisors, that's a 21% turnover rate, too high for an organization whose overall success depends directly on the contributions those people make.

Making the matter worse, though, 180 replacements have been hired in the last four years

across the state, adding up to a whopping 73% average turnover rate in 48 months.

Can this hemorrhaging be stopped?

It can and it must be if we expect to provide the records services that PA DHIA members need to remain competitive.

In fact, stopping this manpower (and womanpower) drain on the organization is one of the primary reasons for reorganizing into a single, statewide, direct-member organization.

REORGANIZING CAN HELP

PA DHIA's plan will provide a field staff organization of assistant supervisors (entry level position), supervisors, senior supervisors, and region managers.

All field personnel would be employees of the state association and, therefore, eligible for promotion to the next level of responsibility if they so wish: ass't. supervisor to supervisor, supervisor to senior supervisor, etc.

Through an organized develop-

ment program, employees can be deliberately trained for additional responsibility at the next level. Then as vacancies occur, there would be a group of trained replacements to compete for the position.

Solving the income problem is somewhat tougher, but it's just as important as promotion opportunity to most supervisors. The solution is obviously more pay, but it must become available in a manner affordable to members.

There are only two ways that happens: one is by improving the value of services to members, which in turn allows them to increase their profitability; the other is by improving supervisor productivity.

Both methods require a well coordinated combination of three things: service development, supervisor hiring and training, and member education.

Under PA DHIA's proposed reorganization, all three would be coordinated by state association

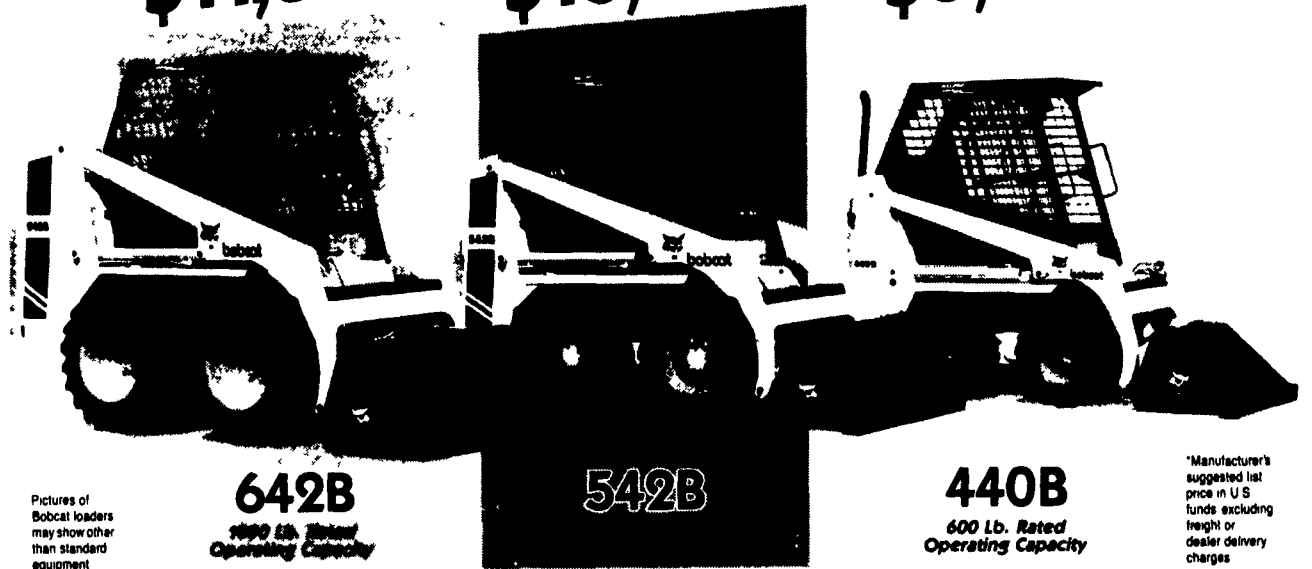
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Average Farm Feed Costs For Handy Reference

To help farmers across the state to have handy reference of commodity input costs in their feeding operations for DHIA record sheets or to develop livestock feed cost data, here's this week's average costs of various ingredients as compiled from regional reports across the state of Pennsylvania. Remember these are averages so you will need to adjust your figures up or down according to your location and the quality of your crop.

- Corn, No. 2y - 2.81
- Wheat, No. 2 - 3.76
- Barley, No. 3 - 2.13
- Oats, No. 2 - 1.71
- Soybeans, No. 1 - 5.72
- New Ear Corn, - 78.30
- Alfalfa Hay - 128.75
- Mixed Hay - 113.25
- Timothy Hay - 94.75



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