

FOCUS

Pennsylvania
Dairy Herd
Improvement Association

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DHIA Names Manager Of Special Services



Geoffrey Barr
Manager of Special Services

Geoffrey Barr has joined the staff of PA DHIA as manager of special services.

The board of directors of PA DHIA recognizes the increasing demand for specialized records and services to meet the management needs of dairymen members.

Geof's primary responsibilities include providing both on-site and off-site support for the ARIS program.

He will be developing and field testing new computerized record keeping programs and providing the necessary field level input.

Also included is the preliminary work with electronic cow identification systems and hand-held, on-farm data entry.

Geof comes to us from British Columbia, Canada, where he was the general manager of British Columbia Dairy Herd Improvement Services.

A graduate of the University of British Columbia, he has held positions in extension organizations, agricultural credit, and DHIA. He has recently served as a co-chairman of the joint Canada/United States Unified Data Task

Force sponsored in part by National DHIA. This group is seeking to find common ground for on-farm/mainframe computer communications.

Mr. Barr is presently located in the southeast section of the state and services developed will be made available statewide as resources allow. More information concerning his project will be released in the near future.

Gary Sheppard
Westmoreland Co.
Dairy Agent

Pastures mean profits for many Pennsylvania farms.

How many times have you wished for a feed ingredient that could maintain high milk production and keep cows healthy? I suppose the search for the great dairy cattle elixir will continue for time eternal. In the mean time, perhaps we should re-examine the basics of cattle nutrition and see what can be done while waiting for this great discovery.

As basic as the concept is, there is no substitute for high quality forage in a milk cow's ration.

High quality does not necessarily mean high protein but it certainly means high energy. Not only will high energy forages produce milk, increases in forage intake levels as a percent of body weight will also occur.

High forage rations are cheaper to feed and healthy for the cow. Clearly, the major function of your feed crop program should be to produce an excellent forage.

Getting forages harvested on time is the biggest barrier to overcome in the quality game. How often have you been confronted with the need to finish corn planting at the same time the first cutting of alfalfa is ready?

How often does the weather leave you in a situation where you

must harvest 100 acres of hay in 2 or 3 days?

Time always seems to be in short supply, especially for the average Pennsylvania farm with mostly family labor and limited capital. These farms tend to have around 50 milking cows, limited silo space and some marginal ground. The challenge to these farms is to find a forage system that requires less time. The solution in many instances is simple. GET MORE HELP!

Cows are capable of feeding themselves. Somewhere in this era of space-aged technology we forgot that cows were built to graze. Properly designed and managed controlled grazing systems can help pastures produce at least 3.5 tons of hay equivalent per year. This equals the Pennsylvania average alfalfa hay yield of 3.2 tons/acre. The major differences with controlled pastures versus average hay fields are that cows do all the harvesting and quality is often higher.

The easiest controlled grazing system to properly manage is the intensive grazing system. The basic principle is a daily rotation of animals through pasture lots sized for complete grazing.

Once grazed, the paddock will be rested until the crop grows back.

For a native forage like a mix of Kentucky Bluegrass and White Clover, the cows would graze a paddock when the grass was 8 inches tall and not return to that paddock until the grass had regrown to 8 inches. The rest per-

iod insures the health of the pasture.

The short height keeps the plant

in its fastest growing stage and maximizes quality. Cow perfor-

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DHIA Graduates Announced

Graduates of the Pa. DHIA Field Service Training Seminar held recently at State College pause briefly from their studies. Seated, from left, are Ross Boldosser, Cumberland County, Mary Ellen Armstrong, from Crawford County, Robin Starceski, Warren County, and Don Feaser Jr., Cumberland County. Standing, from left, are Darren Little, Centre county, Dave Mitchell, Susquehuanna Co., John Mummau, Franklin County, and Earl Bonnie Jr., from Snyder County.

Pastures Mean Profits

On The Record

Dick Barth

PA DHIA General Mgr.



Probably the most disliked aspect of DHIA is the Official rules.

Contrary to popular belief, however, the official rules are not primarily intended to provide a way to punish DHIA members, although that is sometimes the result of them. They are designed to provide a uniform standard for the collection, processing and use of DHIA record information across the United States. And in that regard, they are absolutely essential to the record keeping business.

Also contrary to what some may think, management and staff do not make the rules, nor does USDA. They are made by dairymen, leaders, producers just like you, who take their responsibility seriously and are dedicated to protecting your economic investment in DHIA records services.

Many readers will be aware that Pennsylvania DHIA has taken a

tough stand on this issue over the past four to five years and has been successful in ridding the association of significant fraudulent activity by members. It's been neither easy, nor cheap.

Literally hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent in staff time, legal fees and board expenses to assure that members' records can be trusted. The bad news is the cost of doing it, but the good news is that we haven't lost a single battle so far. It is essential work that must be on-going to be effective and affordable.

Although we have made progress, we can and need to do better in this area. There are still problems with proper cow identification, refusals to test, lack of cooperation by some members to provide needed information, and maybe even some fraud that has not yet been found. These problems continue because we cannot enforce the rules uniformly across Pennsylvania.

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 - 2.850
- Wheat, No. 2 - 3.732
- Barley, No. 3 - 2.134
- Oats, No. 2 - 1.6870
- Soybeans, No. 1 - 5.659
- New Ear Corn, - 76.6927
- Alfalfa Hay - 1340.00
- Mixed Hay - 107.75
- Timothy Hay - 103.50

How Does Your Herd Compare?

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.)—This data is pulled from Pennsylvania DHIA's mainframe computer each week. It is a one-week summary representing approximately one-fourth of the herds on test, as they are tested monthly.

These data are valuable from a business management standpoint and can be used for comparing your operations to the averages from almost 1,400 herds across the state.

DHIA Averages for all herds processed between 4/02/90 and 4/09/90	
Average Days in Milk Per Cow	315
*Value for CWT Milk(\$)	14.09
*Value for CWT Grain(\$)	8.11
*Value for CWT Hay(\$)	4.31
Number of Herds Processed	1,399
Number of Cows Processed	80,413
Number of Cows Per Herd	57.4
Milk Per Cow (Lbs)	16,782
%-Fat	3.70
Fat Per Cow (Lbs)	622
%-Protein	3.20
Protein Per Cow (Lbs)	537

*Value for CWT Silage(\$)	1.51
*Value for Pasture Per Day(\$)	.31
*Value for Milk Per Cow Per Year(\$)	2,366
*Feed Consumed Per Cow Per Year(Lbs)	
A: Grain	6,707
B: Hay	2,773
C: Silage	14,279
D: Day Pasture	68
*Feed Cost Per Cow Per Year(\$)	
A: Grain	544
B: Hay	119
C: Silage	215
D: Pasture	21
*Total Feed Cost Per Cow Per Year(\$)	901
*Income Over Feed Costs Per Year(\$)	1,465
*Grain to Milk Ratio	1:2.5
*Feed Cost Per CWT Milk(\$)	5.37
Avg Level For 836 SCC Herds	324,165
*Member generated figures	