

# What Is ARIS? Questions And Answers

**Q:** I have heard that DHIA offers a program called ARIS, what exactly is ARIS?

**A:** ARIS, Agricultural Records Information Service, is a computer access system available to people with personal computers. ARIS is an on-line system, which means users must dial through a modem and connect to the mainframe computer at the DHIA Service Center to access their records. Any desired data can be viewed or printed at the touch of a key. Authorized users can run reports located in menus created by DHIA programmers. Or, custom reports and inquiries that are exactly tail-

ored to individual needs and tastes can be created.

**Q:** Who can use the ARIS system?

**A:** The service is available to dairymen, veterinarians, and agribusiness consultants who have been authorized to have access to DHIA records via personal computer. To limit the use of the mainframe to approved users, passwords are assigned by the DRPC manager and must be entered before access into ARIS is allowed. Users may change their password at any time to maintain privacy.

**Q:** Do users have access to

everyone's DHIA records?

**A:** No, dairymen are given access only to the records for their own herds. Veterinarians and agribusiness consultants must submit release forms signed by herd owners before gaining access to any records. The system is designed to prohibit alteration of DHIA data. The data is updated when a herd is processed after each test.

**Q:** What are the computer hardware requirements for use of the ARIS program?

**A:** To access the ARIS system, you must have a computer, modem and a usable phone line. The computer must be IBM or 100%

IBM compatible with at least 256 K memory. The modem must be Hayes or Hayes compatible, with 1200 or 2400 baud rates. Because the difference in price is slight and the line speed is twice as fast, 2400 baud is recommended. A hard disk is not necessary, but is also recommended. I'll explain the meanings of these terms in future columns. But if you already own a computer or you're shopping for one, you may want to keep these specifications in mind.

**Q:** How can the ARIS program benefit me?

**A:** With the ARIS information facility, you are able to make management decisions that require immediate action the day your herd processes. The program gives the user the ability to list cows in a variety of ways, such as last test milk, fat, or protein, fat corrected milk, sire, lactation, and SCC. Limits can be placed on the data, for example, a report can be run which lists just first calf heifers in group one.

Consultants can run analysis reports which give averages for cows in different lactation and days in milk groups. The information printed on a report such as

this can be used to make feed recommendations, and to troubleshoot problem areas. Samples of two such reports accompany this article.

ARIS is designed to be used effectively as a management tool to improve herd performance. The ARIS program is versatile, easy to use and well supported.

**Q:** If I subscribe to ARIS, how will I learn to use the program?

**A:** Anyone living in or near Pennsylvania who subscribes to ARIS, will receive a visit from an ARIS representative. This representative will install the software, test your modem and phone line to make sure the connections are good, and give about a two hour training session. After the visit, you will get fifteen days of free service in which time you should practice using the program and become familiar with what ARIS has to offer.

**Q:** How can I find out more about the ARIS program?

**A:** Call the state DHIA office at University Park, 1-800-DHI-ARIS. A representative will be more than happy to answer your questions.

## State DHIA To Charge For Records

Effective January 1, 1992 the Pennsylvania DHIA will begin charging other organizations in the dairy industry for cow production records. That decision was made by the PA DHIA board at the July 1990 meeting by adoption of a joint resolution which had already been adopted by the Northeast DHIA board at their meeting in March 1990.

The decision was made in order to prompt action on resolutions adopted by the state delegates at the last two National DHIA conventions in March 1989 and March 1990. Those resolutions were less specific than the NE-PA resolution.

In adopting their resolution, the Northeast and Pennsylvania boards put the rest of the dairy industry on notice that using DHIA cow records for AI bull proofs, breed association pedigrees, pharmaceutical research and other activities will cost those organizations for access to the records.

In making the decision, the boards pointed out that substantial value is gained by other organizations and non-DHIA producers, both in the U.S. and abroad, without adequate return to the DHIA members whose records are used. As an example, non-DHI producers have access to AI-proven sire semen with the same genetic value and purchase price as that paid by DHIA members whose records were used to establish the bull's value.

Both boards have stated that they hope this decision will bring additional income to their organizations to help offset the increasing cost of data collection on the farm.

The resolution has been discussed at three of the four National DHIA caucuses already this fall. The last caucus meeting was in Minneapolis on December 1, 1990. In presenting the issue to DHIA member representatives from other parts of the country it is hoped that a consensus will develop at the national level and a forum established to discuss and agree on record pricing.

In a related action, the Wisconsin DHIC board adopted a position very similar to the joint NE-PA resolution. It stopped short of setting a date to begin charging, but does indicate that users of records who do not pay for DHIA services need to pay for access to records.

And in response to the actions by all three DHIA's, the NAAB delegates, who represent the AI organizations, acknowledged at their annual meeting last August that a problem exists, and that they want to work with DHIA to develop an equitable solution.

A meeting of DHIA representatives is scheduled in Minneapolis in early December to begin planning for discussions with NAAB and PDCA members.

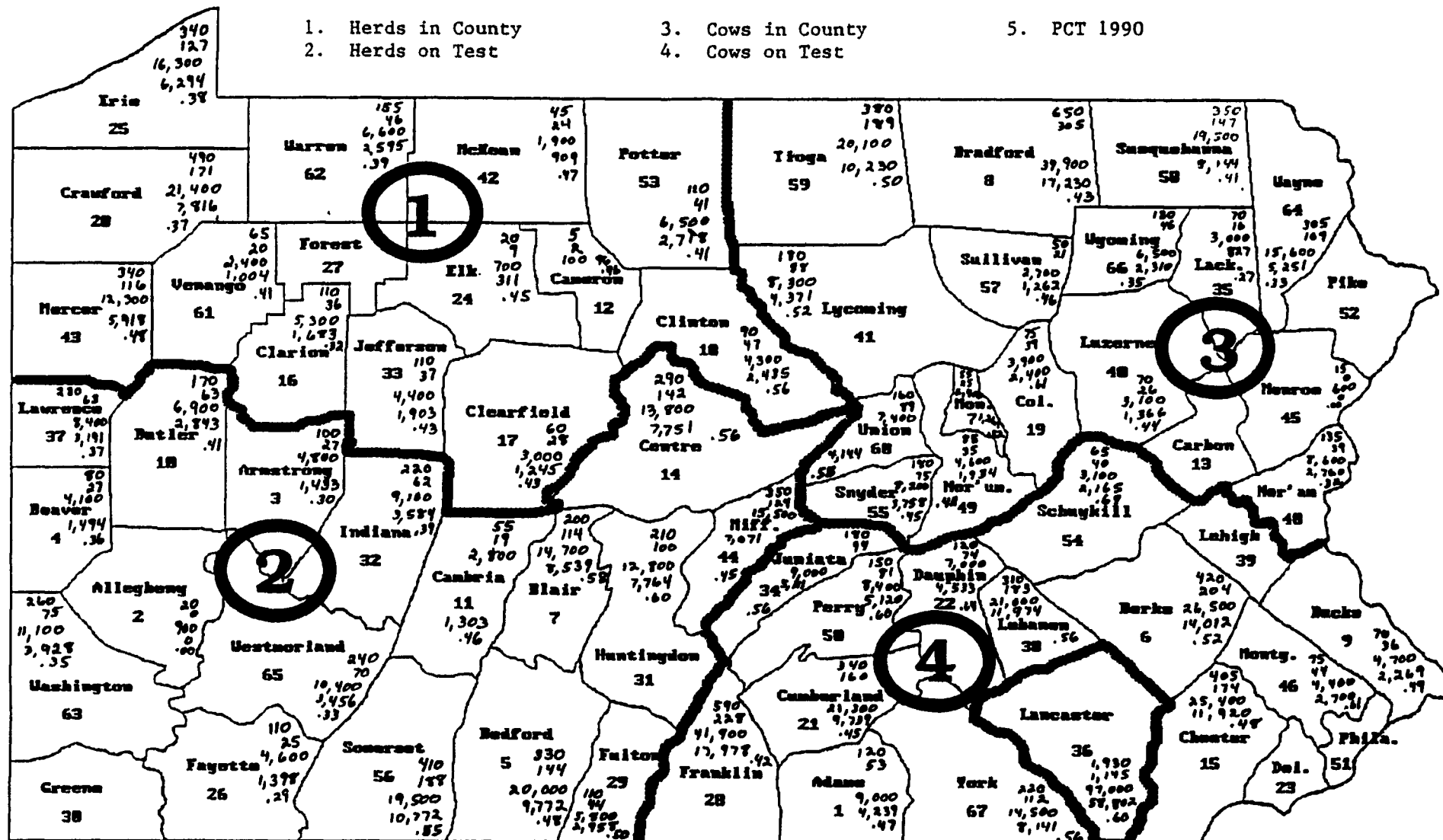
If a successful solution can be found, DHIA members stand to gain income from the use of their records that was never before possible. That income could go a long way toward offsetting the increasing cost of DHIA services and help insure that high quality services and new service development continue in the future.

## Operations Comparisons

Operations performance for PA DHIA in general continues to improve as reflected in the following statistics:

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	Thru October 1990
Herds Enrolled	6,044	6,074	6,062	5,947	5,989	6,095
Prime Herds	NA	NA	12	22	111	197
% AM - PM Herds	22.5	24.5	26.6	29.1	42.2	44.3
ARIS Users	NA	NA	NA	65	129	159
% Herds with Errors	16.64	15.83	17.3	15.5	17.9	15.3
% Samples Untestable	0.59	0.61	0.55	0.45	0.11	0.12
Turn around (Days)	4.96	4.48	4.86	4.10	4.27	3.48
% SCC Herds	60.7	64.8	68.7	74.2	81.6	83.3
New Supervisors	--	42	53	34	51	44
Verification Tests	118	138	138	160	122	181

## REGIONAL MAP AND REGIONAL MANAGERS



- 1. Herds in County
- 2. Herds on Test
- 3. Cows in County
- 4. Cows on Test
- 5. PCT 1990

**REGION 1**  
David Bigelow  
P.O. Box 246  
Madera, PA 16661  
814-378-7887

**REGION 2**  
Larry Hay  
R.D. #3, Box 39-A  
Berlin, PA 15530  
814-267-4754

**REGION 3**  
Don Birchard II  
R.D. #5, Box 130B  
Montrose, PA 18801  
717-934-2800

**REGION 4**  
Harry Fritz  
4090 Lemar Road  
Mercersburg, PA 17726  
717-328-9159

**LANCASTER**  
Jay Mylin  
1592 Old Line Rd.  
Manheim, PA 17545  
717-665-5960