

Atlantic Dairy Co-op

(Continued from Page A20)

Just as last year was a record year for the dairyman, it was also a record year for the cooperative.

"We were making good operations. Operating in the black will continue, but with production 4 percent ahead of a year earlier, we will see a slow reaction from manufacturing side.

"They have inventory somewhat, but overall have good sales. We feel confident there will be a resumption of an increase in demand. Biggest thing we have going is the price of milk and dairy production at the consumer's level.

"In January 1991, based on 1982 to 1984 prices, the cost of all food to the consumer had increased 36 percent while the cost of dairy products increased only 25 percent. It tells a story of the dairy industry.

"Fluid milk is only up 23 percent (in price). But actually down 3 percent from a year ago.

"We're going to see a benefit from that," he said.

Also, Fraher said that the reduc-

tion of federal involvement in the dairy industry, a decrease of some 80 percent, is more or less responsible for the volatility of the milk price.

And while some authority to manage supply is included within the 1990 Farm Bill, specific means have not been issued, nor agreed upon.

"We can't depend on the government," he said.

But if one looks at the demand for over-order premiums and the ability of manufacturers to pay them to the producers, "It represents a basic agreement between producers and manufacturers — they are agreeing to pay more," Fraher said.

Location of Atlantic Dairy members also provides a benefit, Fraher said. "Over the long pull, we still have a location advantage. We have the largest immediate market in the United States. We're looking at \$12.50 milk. The Minnesota-Wisconsin prices is below ours and California is below \$11."

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.)— Following years of decline in the agricultural, manufacturing and mining industries, Pennsylvania's rural economy now relies on the service sector for 56 percent of employment. But further economic diversification depends on the ability of rural counties to maintain or improve physical infrastructure, social services, and education.

Dr. Stephen M. Smith, rural economic development expert and associate professor of agricultural economics in Penn State's College of Agriculture, will be one of several Penn State faculty members speaking at a conference entitled "Pennsylvania's Agricultural Economy: Trends, Issues and Prospects," to be held March 20-21 in the Keller Conference Center.

Pennsylvania has the largest rural population in the U.S., with more than three million residents living in non-metropolitan areas. "Rural does not mean agriculture or farm," said Smith. "You cannot understand the problems of rural economies and people today if

you equate rural with agriculture or with other traditional non-agricultural industries such as mining or forestry."

In fact, Smith said, more people are employed in agriculture-related industries in Pennsylvania's urban counties than in its rural areas. And the loss of rural manufacturing jobs from 1975 to 1987 was more than four times greater than farm employment declines in rural counties.

Smith said the trend toward a service-based rural economy is likely to continue. "One reason is the nature of the modern economy, where technological change continues to decrease the need for labor in manufacturing and resource exploitation," Smith said.

The increasingly large population of rural elderly also creates a demand for social, health, and medical services. In addition, a rural emphasis on tourism and recreation leads to service sector jobs in the lodging, restaurant, retail, and entertainment industries.

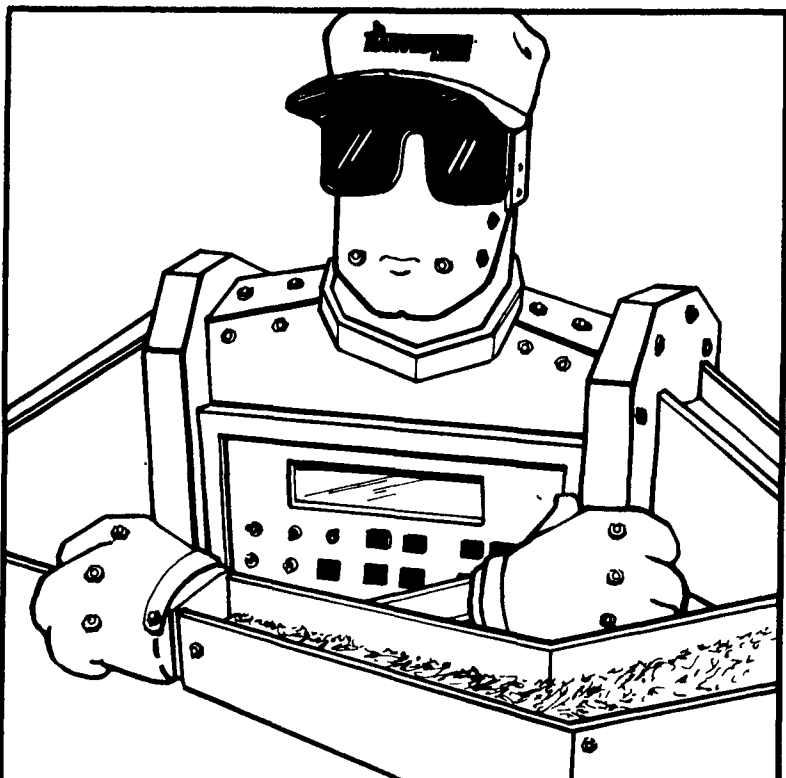
Smith said the availability of non-agricultural employment has allowed more farmers to remain in farming. "In almost 70 percent of the state's farm families, either the operator or the spouse works off the farm," said Smith. "Off-farm

income accounts for two-thirds of taxable farm family income in Pennsylvania."

But Smith says rural areas must diversify further to remain economically competitive with urban counties. Success in competing for new rural industries, he said, means improving transportation, water and waste disposal systems; building a modern communications base; and improving social, public, and private services. "An educated work force supported by proper modern infrastructure can provide rural communities with much more flexibility," he said.

Smith emphasizes that attracting new business to rural areas should not be done at the expense of traditional agriculture and resource-based industries.

The conference on Pennsylvania's agricultural economy also will feature discussions on environmental issues related to agriculture, the effect of international trade agreements on the agricultural economy, food and health issues for consumers, and other topics. For more information, contact the Office of Conferences and Short Courses, 306 Agricultural Administration Building, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, (814) 865-8301.



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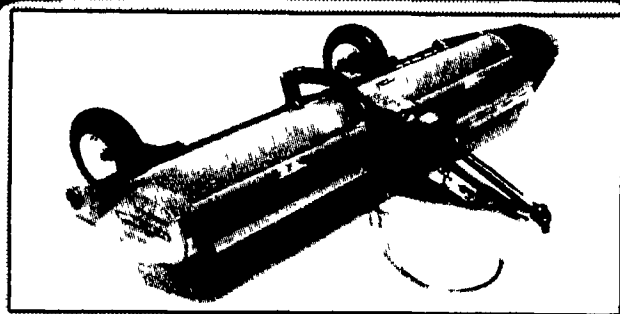


ROLLING ON... IN THE 90's

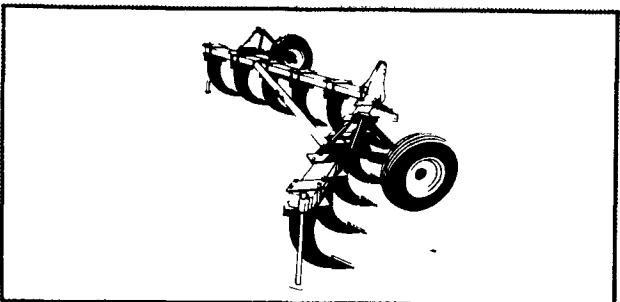


MEETS THE CHALLENGE

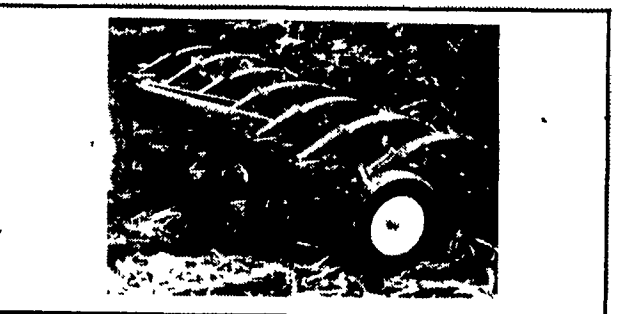
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