

Pa. To Sponsor Rural Statewide Conference

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Gov. Robert P. Casey announced today the commonwealth this summer will sponsor four statewide conferences to bring together rural leaders, community officials, citizens and state government to coordinate strategies and build support for a comprehensive rural development policy.

"The goal of these meetings is to establish partnerships between state government and rural community leaders," said Dr. Helen Wise, deputy chief-of-staff to Gov. Casey. "To improve the quality of life in rural Pennsylvania, we need to coordinate our efforts and design a unified strategy for the future."

The conferences, to be funded by a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, will focus on four key issues: rural growth and development, health care, education, and economic development. They will also address recommendations made by Gov. Casey's Rural Policy Development Team, a public-private partnership he established to provide a formal link between rural community leaders and state government.

Each session will run from 8:30

a.m. to 1 p.m. and include a keynote speaker, a message from Gov. Casey, a question-and-answer period, and small group discussions. All sessions are free and open to the public.

Rural growth and development will be the focus of the first conference on Friday, July 12 in Monroe County. Karen Miller, state secretary of community affairs, will be the keynote speaker. For more information, contact Ned Dempsey, regional director, department of community affairs, at (717) 963-4571.

Strengthening rural health care in the 1990s will be the subject of a second conference in Warren County on Friday, July 19. Alvin B. Grant, director of the Office of Rural Health, Illinois Department of Health, will give the keynote address. For more information, contact Warren County Commissioner Pat Evans, a member of Gov. Casey's Rural Policy Team, (814) 723-7550.

A third conference, focusing on rural education, will be held at Mansfield University on Friday, August 2. State Secretary of Education Donald Carroll will be the keynote speaker. For more information, contact Prof. J. Dennis Murray, research coordinator for

the Rural Service Institute at Mansfield University and a member of Gov. Casey's Rural Policy Team, at (717) 662-4974.

Revitalizing Pennsylvania's rural economy will be the focus of the final conference on Friday, August 9 in Fayette County. Leading the session will be Dr. Stephen M. Smith, associate professor, department of agricultural economics and rural sociology, Penn State University, and Dr. Bernard

Hoffnar, president, Pennsylvania Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils.

For more information, contact Fred Lebder, chairman of the Fayette County Commissioners and a member of Gov. Casey's Economic Development Partnership Board, at (412) 430-1201.

To further encourage partnerships with state government, members of Gov. Casey's cabinet next month will participate in a rural

affairs conference sponsored by the Susquehanna Economic Development Association — Council of Governments (SEDA-COG). From June 23-25, SEDA-COG will sponsor "Shaping the Future in Central Pennsylvania," a three-day conference at Bucknell University designed to develop a regional perspective on critical issues such as economic development, environment, education and societal change.

Offers Cost-Cutting Advice

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Some thought-provoking cards dealing with minimizing a herd's profit potential were put on the table before some 250 commercial and purebred cattle producers recently at the Net Profit Conference, a joint production of the American Polled Hereford Association and the Barzona Breeders Association of America.

Producers attending the two-day event in Maryville, Mo., learned that being a low-cost producer in the cattle business is more than not spending money. "It is being a strategist," said Dr. Jim Gosey of the University of Nebraska, one of five featured speakers who pre-

sented cost-cutting information to producers gathered at Maryville's MFA Farmers Livestock Market the first day.

Other nationally known speakers offering cost-cutting advice on forage utilization, livestock handling and facilities, herd profit potential practices, and breeding and reproductive efficiency included Jim Gerrish of the University of Missouri; Dr. Temple Grandin and Dr. Jim Brinks, Colorado State University; and Gregg Simonds, manager of Deseret Land & Cattle, one of Utah's largest ranching enterprises.

Simonds explained how forward thinking and forage manage-

ment practices have helped Deseret reduce per-cow costs from \$234 in 1979 to \$197 10 years later, all while increasing production.

The Net Profit Conference also featured two panel discussions, one which was led by five progressive producers from four states. Explaining numerous cost-saving measures that have worked for his 1,000-head commercial operation, Barry Dunn, Mission, S.D., said, "We try to match genetics that we buy with our resource base. Longevity in the cow herd is the missing link to profitability."

The industry's market setters, a sale barn operator, an auctioneer, and an order buyer were the feature of the second panel. With an opportunity to evaluate the producer's product on an ongoing basis, Del Clement, MFA's auctioneer, explained that the three work as a team to merchandise the producers' cattle to the best of their ability. He said, "It's easier to please cattlemen who have good cattle to sell."

Frank and Lynn Felton of Felton Ranch hosted the second day of conference activities. Focusing on herd management for optimizing productivity, several industry officials demonstrated the importance of cow production records and ultrasound for performance and pelvic measurements in heifers and bulls. Tours of Polled Hereford and Barzona cow and sire groups and the two breed crosses rounded out this conference.

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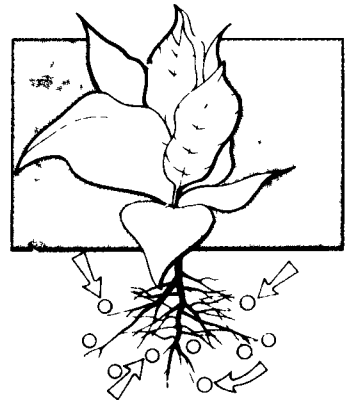
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