

Holstein Association, Anitech Introduce Electronic Cow I.D.

B R A T T L E B O R O ,
Vt. — Animal identification is about to enter the electronic age. So claimed the CEO of the Holstein Association of America, Steve Kerr, who recently said the dairy industry is more than ready for new technology to reduce labor costs and build profit margins. Kerr joined Anitech International Chairman Zane Akins at World Dairy Expo, Madison, in describing several applications of the Destron/IDI electronic transponder, which uses radio frequency identification technology. The transponder, embedded in ordinary, plastic ear tags for livestock, carries a 10 digit number which can be read by hand-held or

gateway stationary readers. The animal identification information can be coupled with automated milking and feeding systems already on farms, and used for record keeping by AI technicians, veterinarians and milk recording supervisors. "We are helping dairymen achieve efficient management systems, and accurate animal identification is the key element for labor-efficient record keeping. We believe it's necessary to actively support the advancement of electronic identification technology," Kerr said. The Holstein executive said the association is looking forward to incorporating electronic identifi-

cation in its registry and animal identification processes, herd classification, and performance information systems. The Holstein Association is the nation's largest dairy breed organization. It registers and identifies nearly 400,000 Holsteins each year, and maintains a database of 16 million animal identities. Akins, said Anitech International was able to advance the release date of electronic identification by embedding transponders in ear tags, with which farmers are already familiar. They offer the advantage of visible identification, as well as communicate with electronic readers and computer systems.

Anitech is continuing to collect data on transponders implanted under the skin of animals, Akins said, and the Food and Drug Administration is reviewing the information for effects on animal and food safety.

Some dairymen may favor the implants, once they're approved, Akins said, but the ear tags are here now, and they are an inexpensive alternative to magnetic transponders.

Md. Seeks Hay, Straw Producers For Directory

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — The Marketing Services Office of the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) wants to hear from Maryland farmers who will have hay or straw for sale this winter. MDA plans to have the "1991-92 Maryland Hay and Straw Directory" ready for distribution by mid-November. Farmers who want to be listed in the directory may request an application form from their cooperative extension office or the MDA Marketing Services Office. The deadline for applications is October 17. The Maryland Hay and Straw Directory is published as a service

to buyers and sellers of hay and straw and there is no fee for listing. The directory will be available to livestock producers, horsemen, contractors, and others who are trying to locate a source of hay or straw. A copy of the directory will also be mailed to more than 250 licensed horse stables located throughout Maryland. Farmers may request an application to be listed in the directory by calling or writing Jan Schmid, The Md. Hay and Straw Directory, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Marketing Services, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401, (800) 492-5590.

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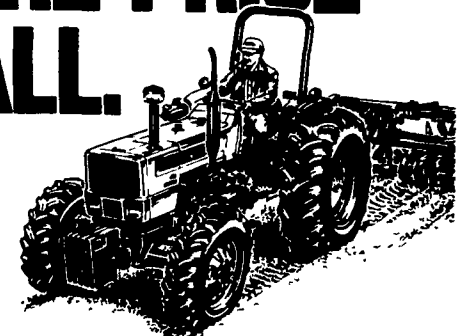
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