

# A History And Perspective Of The Pennsylvania DHIA Program

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board, and travel expense was the students responsibility. In many cases they came to Penn State to gain this two week education hoping there would be a job for them someplace in the state. Often there was a wait until a position became available.

In later years an association would locate a person they were interested in hiring and would send them to Penn State for the training. This Supervisor candidate was assured of a job if he passed the shortcourse. Often his expenses were paid by the association. In recent years Supervisors are trained to perform the farm level tasks by a DHIA fieldman, and after working for a short time they come to Penn State for a three-day short-course to be "polished."

Turnover among supervisors was high, over 50%, even in the 1960s. The hours were long and pay was low. The tester furnished his own on-the-job transporta-

tion and had to hustle to earn a gross salary of \$2400 to \$3500 per year. There was no hospitalization, sick days, paid vacation, or fringe benefits except for room and board. He slept in a different bed each night and ate meals with the farmer for whom he tested. On occasion he might sleep with the farmer's daughter. That was a "fringe" benefit that could result in a supervisor becoming one of the family, terminated, or both.

Testing of the samples and working on the herd book might be done at the kitchen table, in the garage, milk house, or laundry area, hot places in the summer and freezing cold in the winter. One could always tell a DHIA Supervisor by the burn holes in his pants and shirt from Sulphuric Acid used in running the Babcock Test. Numerous incidents attest to the terrible risk to an individual handling Sulphuric Acid. One Supervisor was testing samples in his own home when a young daughter pulled a beaker of acid from the kitchen table

and it spilled over her head, neck, and chest, causing severe and lasting disfigurement. Another Supervisor was testing samples in a milk house. While carrying a 4/5 gallon jug of acid across a wet, slippery, concrete floor he slipped, dropped and broke the glass acid jug, and with jagged glass and acid everywhere, promptly sat down in the mess. It was not necessary to take his pants off. When he stood up they fell off, and even though a water hose was close by it was a long time before he recovered from the burns to some very sensitive portions of his anatomy.

County Agents would keep and build a waiting list of herds wanting to go on test. Some Supervisors would build an association to a level that did not permit a day off for rest, vacation, or illness. Testing was an everyday business, Sundays and holidays included. When an association became overfilled with herds and the agents waiting list long enough, a new association would be formed. It was the Supervisors responsibility to build upon this beginning herd base, since dairymen seldom believed it was their responsibility to get other herds on test.

The cost of testing in the early days is not well documented. However, in 1954 Gearhart listed the potential start-up costs to begin an association.

Individual Herd Membership Fee: \$20.00

Monthly Charge depending on herd size & location: \$7.50 to \$12/day

Equipment & Materials: \$500.00

Centrifuge: \$58.00

Pails, Dippers, Scale: \$75.00

Disinfectant, brushes, pan: \$8.00

Acid for one year's testing: \$35.00

Calculator: \$270.00

Ear tags & punch: \$13.00

Supervisor earnings were estimated at \$200 to \$300 per month plus room and board, and he provided his own transportation. District Association expenses were \$15 to \$25/year, and included costs of workmans compensation, liability, and property damage insurance. Social Security cost was 2% from the Supervisor and 2% from the Association.

Parameters were established: 30 cows (in one herd) were considered one days work; 40-60 cows (in one

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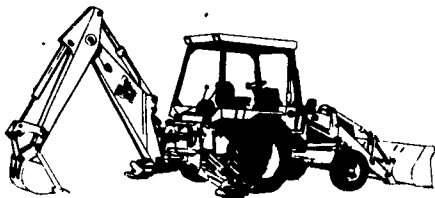
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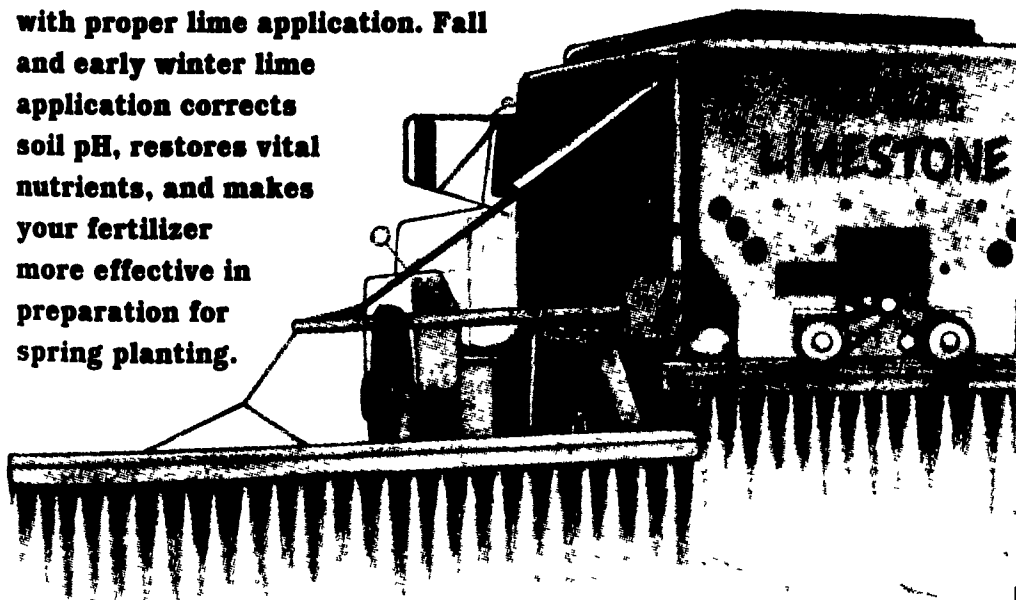


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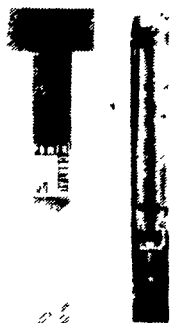


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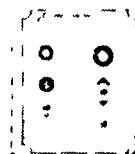
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