

A History And Perspective Of The Pennsylvania DHIA Program

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father on a dairy farm. As a programmer, his knowledge of dairy and DHIA needs made him the leader in writing programs and perfecting them, including the ones that generated the AI reports. In later years he devoted full time to DHIA, and has since moved from Management Services to direct employment in DHIA.

While DHIA has paid Management Services for computer time and expertise, they have played a critical role in the successes of records reporting. As DHIA has enlarged and perfected its own computer system, the affiliation with PSU and Management Services is being phased out.

The interaction among the highest level officers of PSU, the College of Agriculture, the Department of Dairy and Animal Science, the State and District DHIA Directors, and the dairy industry has been a positive force. PSU, DHIA, and its dairymen have benefited from this symbiotic relationship. None of these organizations could have achieved their goals working alone. There is more to be accomplished, but the close working relationship must remain strong to achieve maximum benefit for all concerned.

Section 6

Artificial Breeding Cooperatives and DHIA

The Bull Rings preceding artificial insemination (AI) relied on dairy records to evaluate their sires. As late as 1941 about 80 Bull Rings were active in the state. With the founding of First Pennsylvania Artificial Breeding Cooperative (First PA) in 1942, the use of DHIA records expanded beyond the confines of the county line and the local bull ring. Apparently some dairymen resented having their dairy records used to evaluate bulls owned by another organization. Even though the same dairymen were active in both DHIA and First PA, some had a hard time seeing the common ground and benefits. In 1957 a resolution was sent to First PA from a county in their service area saying "Since the IBM Record System is to be imposed on all State DHIA's, and whereas the Artificial Breeding Cooperatives (ABCs) have approved of such records, the benefits of which are altogether to the advantage of the ABC rather than DHIA, and since DHIA herd owners are asked to bear all costs of records, the County does seek and petition First PA ABC to reduce the cost of first service to all DHIA herd owners."

When the State Board of DHIA was formed in 1954, representatives from the AI Studs were asked to be members of the Policy and Planning Committee. They continued their presence on the DHIA Policy Committee for some years. The ABCs were assessed 1¢ per first service beginning in May 1955 to help finance State DHIA, and could receive copies of completed lactation reports at cost. Later additional reports based on DHIA records were approved for AI use at cost. Larry Specht played a major role in generating these sire reports since the advent of computer processing.

In May 1960, when State DHIA was operating so

deeply in debt, they met with the ABCs and prepared a proposal for the ABC Directorate that "a grant at the rate of 3¢ per cow bred per year be given to DHIA by each ABC Unit based on 1959 breedings." In October 1960 this was approved by the five Cooperative Breeding Organizations, and State DHIA received a check in the amount of \$13,805. They voted to continue this grant for the 1960 business year. There is no evidence that it was extended further.

Prior to 1964 the ABC Units had been awarding a certificate and five dollars to each supervisor who was judged by the DHIA fieldman to be doing superior work. In 1964 it was proposed that in lieu of the SS award the PA Association of ABC sponsor the annual banquet at the State Supervisors meeting in State College. During the same time, the State Association of ABCs was abandoned and Atlantic Breeders Cooperative and Northeastern Breeders Cooperative emerged as the AI Units operating in the state. They alternated in sponsoring the DHIA Supervisors Annual Banquet from 1964 to about 1985. They also sponsored the meal at each of the five district supervisor conferences, held in the spring and fall each year, beginning in 1964.

Section 7

Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association and DHIA

The Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association (PDA) was formed in 1925. Membership in the PDA is composed of dairymen who are DHIA members. In 1926 the first yearbook listed herds and production averages completed the previous year. Early yearbooks (Annual Meeting Reports) contained the complete text of all remarks made by speakers, and Charlie Gearhart was usually one of the speakers on matters related to DHIA. The format of this yearbook has changed over the years. Now it is nearly 100% an annual report of DHIA activity, listing all herds on test over specified minimums of butterfat.

The yearbook herd and cow listing from 1926 through 1957 was taken from a yearly state summary compiled by Gearhart, Gilmore, Ace, and others. Since 1958 a hard copy taken directly from the computer printout has been photo reproduced for the year book. In addition, the yearbook now contains some advertising, an educational section provided by Extension, a DHIA organizational section, and a listing of all supervisors and award citations. The cost of printing this yearbook is borne by PDA at a cost of approximately \$8000 per year.

At year end summary time each herd over a minimum level of butterfat received a ribbon. Certificates were awarded for herd lactation averages and for lifetime production of both milk and fat. PDA purchased and gave to DHIA members all ribbons, certificates, and seals for about 60 years. Starting in 1964, the PDA awarded a plaque and a check for \$100 to the Superior Supervisor, a practice that continued each year until about 1985. For each supervisor completing 25 years of testing PDA awarded a gold wrist watch. That too was discontinued in 1985.

Section 8

ADSA, USDA, and DHIA

The partnership and solidifying leadership on a national level began when Helman Rabild left Michigan to join the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 1908. In his new role he developed and extended organized cow testing throughout the United States. USDA has continued an active role for many years through the dynamic leadership of J. F. Kendrick, and others including Dean Plowman, Frank Dickenson, and Basil Eastwood.

The American Dairy Science Association (ADSA) began its active role in 1924 when a Dairy Records Committee was named. From then until about the mid-1960s, a special Extension Section at each ADSA annual meeting was devoted to every matter of concern related to the conduct of DHIA programs. This gathering of Dairy Extension and USDA scientists who were responsible for dairy record programs in their respective area was an intense work session, lasting the duration of the ADSA meeting, and was devoted to making testing procedures uniform throughout the United States. Rules and regulations were improved, sampling and testing procedures and forms were standardized, and educational use of the records was presented. It was at this annual meeting that Lyman Rich and Bliss Crandall of Utah first presented the possibility of using computers for records keeping. The forwarding of records to USDA from each of the states offered many opportunities for broadened use of records, and has helped develop our present sire and cow evaluation information.

ADSA and USDA were to the national progress of DHIA what the Dairy Extension Specialist was to the State, and the County Agent was to the County level of testing. It's difficult to imagine a successful records keeping program without the input of each of the interested parties. The beneficiary of this program is DHIA as we know it today.

Section 9

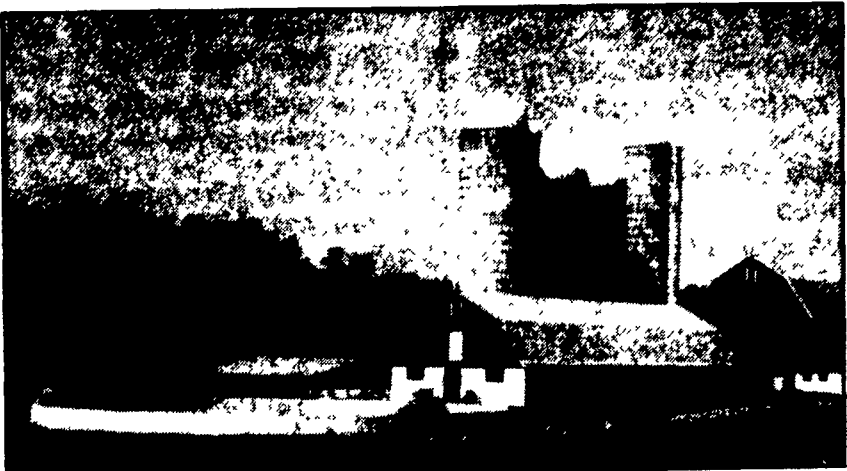
The DHIA Supervisor

There is no word to adequately describe a DHIA Supervisor. The person is a composite of qualities and character. Some have endured all of two weeks on the job, and some have been in the field for 50 years. They have been and are the backbone, the foundation, and the energy upon which a strong testing association has prospered. Because they are at the mercy of the dairyman's schedule they work long hours, often on the road by 3:00 AM and packing the final samples in refrigeration at 11:00 PM. They believe in what they are doing and delight in seeing a good herd and good records being used to the fullest benefit. One of the more soul disturbing experiences for a Supervisor is going to a farm and having to open last month's test report to find the barn sheet for this month's test. Time and money is wasted for both the dairyman and the Supervisor. Lack of attention or interest on the part of dairymen is a particularly "down-time" for the Supervisor, and it happens on occasion. On the other hand, praise, an invitation to the family picnic or a wedding, or a bonus at the end of the test year makes the job rewarding.

Pennsylvania has employed over 200 Supervisors per year for the past 25 years. Most were farm raised boys and girls who left the home farm because their ser-

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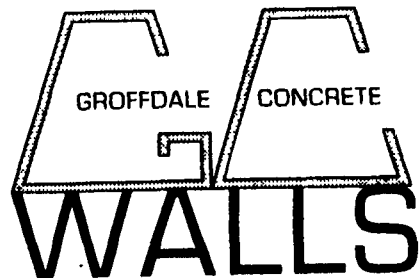
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