

Oakenbound Farms No. 8

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manage matings around BLAD, not to cull every positive carrier.

However, artificial insemination studs are not being accepted if they carry the gene for BLAD. The rationale is that if all A.I. semen is BLAD free, then even if a cow is a carrier, the offspring will not have any symptoms, and can be milked and bred.

The occasional bull calf that could show up as a carrier should not be used for breeding.

Those who would use untested cleanup bulls run a risk of producing cattle with BLAD symptoms.

While the strategy should work, the practice of killing bulls testing positive for the BLAD gene is a financial strain on those who maintain top quality breeding programs.

One, well-bred young bull which then tests positive for BLAD can represent a loss of several thousand dollars for the breed-

er. The money, time and selection which went into attempting to breed a desirable sire is gone.

However, such things are being taken care of and all cattle breeders are working with it.

As breeders all over are doing, the Troutmans are testing their bulls also.

The money made by selling breeding stock doesn't generate the most dependable income, but the extra cash from time to time comes in handy, the brothers said; especially this past year with the drought, the tightness of feed supplies and the low milk prices.

"Selling breeding stock is a by-product, a diversification of attempting to reach our main goal," Nelson said.

There are other benefits to taking extra care to breed well.

"It makes a better manager out of you," Nelson said, adding that when you sell breeding stock there can be nothing about the farm itself that may distract from the animals.

But selling and maintaining a reputation for having good breeding stock isn't easy. "Every bull we have has to gain between 2- to 3-pounds-per-day and you have to do it economically," Nelson said explaining that the stud operations won't look at a bull as a potential sire if it doesn't gain fast and steady enough.

The reputation that Troutmans and the Oakenbound name has built for breeding Holsteins is solid. Nelson said it's based on a lot of things, but a lot of it is the concern that, "I like my cattle to do well for their new owners."

There are a few other examples of the Oakenbound breeding program that are of interest, such as Oakenbound Thor Toby-twin, a Very Good 88 with an excellent mammary that Nelson expects will go Excellent. Her dam went Excellent 92.

The Troutmans said they expect to continue with breeding cows for the best traits and to market the high pedigree that they have achieved.

Irwin To Speak On Polish Agriculture

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)—Jay Irwin, Lancaster County Extension director emeritus, will be discussing his six-month assignment in Poland at Lancaster County Cooperative Extension's annual meeting, at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, February 13, in the Farm and Home Center.

Jay and his wife Betty have recently completed a six-month assignment in Poland as part of a Penn State and United States Department of Agriculture project. He will be showing slides and sharing his insight on the situation

in Poland, what is currently happening, and the issues facing the people in this former communist country as they adjust to a free market economy.

The evening will begin with a social hour featuring Lancaster County commodity groups serving a finger food smorgasbord. An ice cream sundae party will follow the program. Tickets are \$2 per person by February 7, and are available by contacting the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Office, (717) 394-6851.

USDA Extends Filing Period On Milk Pricing Alternatives

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending the deadline to March 2 for submission of proposals on alternatives to the Minnesota-Wisconsin (M-W) price currently used to set minimum prices in all federal milk marketing orders.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the extension is in response to an industry group request for more time to submit its proposed alternative to the M-W price.

The M-W price is the average of prices paid to farmers in the Minnesota-Wisconsin area for manufacturing grade (Grade B) milk, or, milk eligible for use only in manufactured milk products.

In effect since the early 1960's, the M-W price has been widely accepted in the dairy industry as a good measure of changes in the supply and demand for milk nationally, Haley said.

A continuing decline in Grade B milk production, in part the result of more stringent sanitary requirements on dairy farms, is gradually making the M-W price unusable in formulating milk prices.

"Eventually, there will not be enough of that kind of milk sold to make a reliable base price," Haley said. "USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, which compiles the M-W price, questions whether it will be able to provide that price past 1992 or early 1993."

"The proposals, to be discussed at a national hearing later this year, should come directly from the dairy industry and the public.

Proposals should be mailed by March 2 to the Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

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