

Bradford Dairy Day Held

RONALD CLARK

Bradford Co. Correspondent

TROY — More than 225 farmers, exhibitors and friends took in the exhibits and listened to the pertinent subjects presented at the 1992 Bradford County Day held at the Troy Middle School on Monday. Special enjoyment resulted from the distribution of ice cream milk punch by Pennsylvania's Dairy Princess, Robin Wilbur, and her attendants.

The event was organized and presented by the Bradford County Cooperative Extension, with Extension Director Jake Guffy and his staff being responsible for much of the planning. Further assistance was given by area Farm Supply Dealers, Marketing Firms, Farm Organizations and Businesses. Bob Thompson, Eastern Milk Producers representative, acted as EmCee and kept the program moving.

Beginning at 9:30 a.m., the attendants had the opportunity to visit with the exhibitors and to learn new developments being made available through product development and improvements. The formal program began with the ever-popular awarding of door prizes. This activity was repeated two more times during the course of the day.

The first speaker, Lawrence Hutchinson, DVM, and Penn State Extension Veterinarian, presented a talk describing foot care and dry cow care. Pointing out that the problem is exacerbated by the intensive housing in vogue today, along with the absence of outdoor exercise, he told how losses result from lameness, leading to decreased milk yield, loss of body weight, lower feed efficiency, lower heat detection and lower settling, as well as the costs of treatment. Cows and heifers most susceptible are those in which hoof growth and hoof wear are not equal for a variety of reasons. Daily exercise, pasture or exercise in dirt lots while dry, foot baths, and gradual adaptation of stock to hard surfaces do much to help overcome excessive hoof growth and resulting ailments, while excessive wear can be lessened by reduced abrasiveness in new concrete, grooving old concrete, and avoiding sudden changes in rations. Moisture control is also highly important to inhibit infections. Selection of sires with good foot structure is also desirable.

In dry cow management, vaccinate at least three weeks before calving. Dry stock should be brought to ideal physical condition, dedicated maternity stalls used, adequate selenium provided in feed, in bolus or by injection, prevention of excessive calcium loss at calving time, and continual cleanliness are important factors.

County Agent Guffy cited the wide recycling of milk pricing, and enjoined dairymen to plan for this as a continuing phenomenon, and to adjust budgeting so that lean years can be survived. He stressed that dairy people must take over their own pricing and marketing strategies, and make them work. Bob Thompson, marketing specialist, echoed Mr. Guffy's concerns, and warned of the pitfalls of the GATT conversations, including the danger of accusations from other countries of U.S. excessive supports. He expects that the Minnesota/Wisconsin pricing systems will eventually have less effect as dairy farmers develop their own strategies, but that this will not be

immediate.

PFA Accountant Steve Lyons expects that taxes will increase, record keeping will be of ever-increasing importance, and that the effects of the 1991 drought have not been fully felt as yet. Finally, Lynn Chubbock, Northeastern Farm Credit, emphasized the need for continuing improvement of business practices and management, more educational seminars, the importance of setting goals for the dairy industry for five to ten year periods. He noted that competition for capital will be greatly increased both in the near and more distant times, because of the emergence of capitalistic growth in Eastern Europe and other overseas countries. Lastly, he cited the need for maintaining strength of family farms.

Following a lunch break and further opportunity to circulate among exhibitors, Dr. Hutchinson resumed the program with his disclosure of the Dairy Quality Assurance Program. The need for this program is greatly increased by consumers who are concerned about residual antibiotics in milk. With the increased accuracy of tests for such residuals, and the high costs associated with shipping contaminated milk, publicity of such additives is becoming prevalent. Dr. Hutchinson listed a ten-point program, now available in Pennsylvania, which will emphasize good practice and close cooperation with veterinarians to assure of proper use of antibiotics, both over-the-counter and by prescription. The program is in printed form, and may be obtained from milk handlers; simply ask for the 10-point plan booklet.

PA Dairy Princess Robin Wilbur gave a brief description of her recent activities, pointing out that she will attend the ADA meeting. She reminded the audience to use REAL dairy products.

Little Named RCMA General Manager

BATAVIA, N.Y. — Arthur Little, who has worked with the Regional Cooperative Marketing Agency (RCMA) since its inception in the 1970s, has taken over the day-to-day operation of the organization that works to increase dairy farmers' income.

Little, an agricultural economist who has 40 years of experience in the dairy industry and has worked for several dairy cooperatives in the Northeast, was executive director of RCMA when it was organized in the mid-1970s.

He has continued to work with the organization since that time, most recently as administrative assistant.

In his new position, Little will direct the day-to-day operation of RCMA in its efforts to raise the price of milk for dairy farmers.

During its many years of operation, RCMA has generated approximately \$100 million in additional income for dairy farmers in the form of premiums paid for milk production. The organization has more than 20,000 members throughout the 11 states of the Northeast.

The appointment of Little as general manager is part of a restructuring of the organization, which included a move of the cooperative's office from Batavia to Liverpool, N.Y. RCMA's new address is 600 Oswego St., Liverpool, N.Y. 13088.

Its toll-free telephone number remains 800-634-3723. Its regular telephone number is 315-453-7715. The fax number is



These Bradford County FFA students had a display of their activities at Dairy Day.

The final speaker of the day was Bob Ormsby, of DHIA. He described the Heifer Management Program introduced by DHIA on January 1, 1991. Great emphasis is being placed on having heifers calve at 24 months of age, with weights of upwards of 1,300 pounds. Currently, 67 percent of first-calf heifers exceed these criteria. Loss of income for each month over 24 results in net losses of about \$20.00 per month, so the importance of timely calving cannot be overlooked. Ormsby also gave the audience insight of the wealth of information now available through DHIA, as well as showing how farmers can obtain other information tailored to their precise needs. Since much data are already entered into DHIA computers for present members, programs can be tailored to fit the needs of almost any dairy operator.

The Dairy Day Program concluded at 3:30, with many exhibitors remaining to answer questions relating to individual farmers.



Robin Wilbur, Pennsylvania Dairy Princess, and another woman.

315-453-0825.

Carmen L. Ross of Secaucus, N.J., remains executive director of RCMA, but serves on a consulting basis. Ross served as RCMA executive director for 2½ years, during which time RCMA was responsible for establishing a minimum New York State Class I milk price under the Rogers-Allen Act.

"This achievement is particularly significant because this was the first time since its enactment in the 1930s that the Rogers-Allen Act has been used to establish a state-

wide price," said RCMA President Lewis Gardner.

"New York dairy farmers received about \$16 million during the four months the price was in effect. In addition, New England used this price as the basis to set minimum milk prices in their respective states."

Both Gardner and Little emphasized the importance for dairy farmers to continue to work together if they are to improve their economic situation.

"Despite the extremely hard times that dairy farmers have experienced in recent years, I'm as

convinced now as I was 20 years ago that RCMA is the only way that dairy farmers can improve their economic position," Little said.

"If dairy farmers work together by supporting a unified program, they will get results," he said. "This has been proven in the past 20 years when dairy farmers throughout the Northeast have benefited by at least \$100 million as a result of RCMA actions. We must move ahead and capitalize on the fact that there is strength through unity."

Berks County 4-H Horse Club Members Honored

CONNIE LEINBACH

Berks Co. Correspondent

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Members of the three Berks County 4-H horse clubs were honored recently at the 14th annual banquet in the 4-H Community Center here.

Brett Shorley, a senior at Boyertown Area High School and member of the Top Notch 4-H Club, won the Highpoint Blueform senior member award and the outstanding senior member award.

"It was a banner year for Brett," said Debbie Dietrich, 4-H extension agent, noting that the young man also was selected to be a delegate to the national 4-H Congress, held in December in Chicago.

Katie Ramsay, also of Boyertown, was awarded the Highpoint

Blueform junior member award. She also received the outstanding junior member award.

Club members in the Blue Mountain Equestrians, the Oley Saddle-ites and Top Notch competed throughout the years in hippology (horse science), horse judging, the horse bowl, and public speaking.

Five Berks Countians participated in the state 4-H Horse Show. They are Amanda Moletress, Christopher Gerow, Angie Zeller, Brett Shorley, and Mark Runge.

The following other outstanding members were given awards: April Wood, Boyertown R.D.4, reserve junior member; J.T. Ramsay, intermediate member; and Ronja Henderson, reserve.

Mark Runge, Douglassville,

reserve outstanding senior member.

Spirit of 4-H — Paula Galley, Douglassville, Nicole Smith, Boyertown R.D. 4, and Walter Wood, Boyertown R.D. 4.

Communications — Angie Zeller, Berville R.D. 1; Susan Braun, Hamburg R.D. 3; and Beth Britton, Boyertown R.D. 4.

Showmanship — Caitlin Houck, Boyertown R.D. 6 and Tracy Kramer, Hamburg R.D. 3.

Horse knowledge — Amanda Mariano, Boyertown R.D. 4 and Melissa Arthur, Oley R.D. 1.

All 4-H participants completed applications and wrote a story about their 4-H activities, Dietrich said, but the above winners did the best job on them.