

# Extension Office

(Continued from Page A19) concern "is to keep quality programs in Delaware County."

He said that the Penn State Delaware County campus was suggested as an alternative site, but there is no space available to house an extension office. "The feeling is that the facility in the community ought to be close to the people of the community," he said.

It remains a possibility that some money could be allocated to help renovate the Williamson Farm as a possible location, but other options are still being considered as of presstime.

Alter emphasized that Penn State remains committed to supporting the office and that, as long as the county support is withdrawn, there will have to be "dramatic program reductions." Penn State will make a decision within the following weeks.

"The budget crunch is real," said Bryan. "But there's no other department that has a 50 or 65 percent reduction in support as is the case with cooperative extension. So, for some reason, cooperative extension was singled out."

Now, Bryan has rallied the support of 4-H and extension volunteers to help the council reconsider the budget arrangements. If the budget isn't reconsidered, many programs are in jeopardy, according to Bryan, including commercial ag, home economics, 4-H, the Master Gardener program, and home horticulture programs.

In all, about 5,030 4-H members, 380 volunteers, and numerous others in a wide array of projects are in jeopardy.

To help dissuade the council from cutting the funds, a project was launched a few weeks ago. An action sheet, "Delaware County Cooperative Extension Future At Risk," funded by the 4-H program, with help from volunteers at the extension, was mailed out to thousands of supporters, agribusiness, various schools, and other agencies to drum up support for the program.

The letter states that without the support of the county council, "your extension program will be severely cut back and possibly eliminated."

"We must vacate the Hunt Club building and 4-H Center at Rose Tree Park by July 1, and we have no other place to go..."

According to the sheet, program offerings considered for reduction or elimination include school base 4-H and youth programming, home horticulture, pesticide applicator recertification, publications offered through the extension, summer programming, classes in

home economics and family living, and other programs.

"We sincerely hope that we can continue to serve you, but our future is uncertain," it reads. The letter lists the contacts of the members of the county council, state and federal legislators, and other important contacts.

Meanwhile, Bryan and his staff are preparing for a worst-case scenario — moving the office to a less expensive location.

"It's going to be difficult operating procedures if we have to fragment the office and move part of the staff one place and part another," he said. "But we might have to go to that extreme."

Bryan said the staff is looking for low-cost facilities. "We're thinking, how much secretarial help can we afford to buy out of \$50,000?"

Bryan said in that area of Delaware County (affected by high cost of living and expensive housing), an average secretary with benefits would cost about \$20,000 a year. Office space, at about \$15 a square foot, would quickly deplete the budget.

Bryan said they cannot afford to rent an office at the going market rate. "We've got to find some facilities cheaper than the going rate to house the staff."

Until then, Bryan waits on Penn

# Cut Costs By Using EPDs

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — EPDs... Expected Progeny Differences. The mere thought of trying to learn how to use this type of breeding information can sometimes scare cattlemen away from a valuable resource.

However, EPDs are proving to be a significant cost-cutting tool for cattlemen as demand increases for higher-quality, cost-efficient cattle.

Today, most breed associations maintain current genetic information on all registered animals. This material is available to commercial breeders simply for the asking, and most times at no charge.

Dr. John Hough, director of education and research for the Ameri-

can Polled Hereford Association, said that EPDs are not mysterious, hard-to-understand numbers if a few basic principles are understood.

"The variability between animals is never totally genetic. EPDs are simply predictions of what is expected to occur. The more performance information available, the more accurate the EPDs," he said.

EPDs are calculated using information from three sources: the individual animal's own performance records, performance of its relatives and, finally and most importantly, performance of its progeny relative to

contemporaries.

The information compiled in EPD records can be used to help determine a number of traits for your herd. EPDs are maintained for birth weight, weaning weight, yearling weight, milk production, scrotal circumference, and sometimes calving ease and other traits.

Buying bulls with complete EPD records makes substantial economic sense. By knowing what type of offspring the bull has the capability to produce, you can better predict performance from your herd and begin making herd improvements more efficiently.

Hough says it is important to be aware of EPD accuracies which can vary among bulls. A breed's sire summary will generally define the accuracy values of each animal. Some breed associations have begun to include complete histories of each bull listed in their summaries.

Hough emphasizes EPDs are a good tool only when used with complete understanding. One of the most important things to remember is not to compare EPDs across breeds. EPD values are only correct within a single breed.

Additional information on EPDs and how to use this cost-cutting management tool can be obtained from your county extension agent, your land-grant university, or a breed association.

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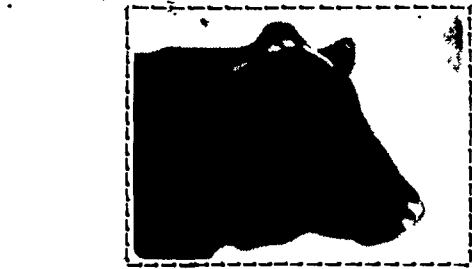


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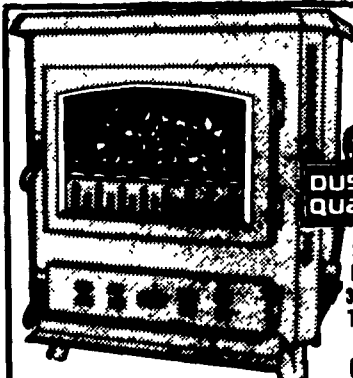
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