

# Review Herd Goals At Year-End

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Fences are mended, machinery has been put away for the winter, a good supply of feed is in the barn, and the cow herd is doing fine. It's

winter and the perfect time to review long-term herd improvements, goals, and progress you've made during the past year.

There are a number of items you can review or, if you never have put your breeding plans on paper, now's the perfect time to complete short- and long-term plans.

Dr. John Hough, director of education and research for the American Polled Hereford Association said there are many sources to help you plan herd needs, genetic improvements, pasture management, and other facets of day-to-day operations.

"If you run a cow-calf operation, your county extension office will have an extensive amount of material on setting herd goals," Hough said. "In addition, state livestock associations and breed associations are willing to provide information and guidance."

Hough says one of the first items on your list should be breeding stock. If the offspring your cows are producing fits your goals and earns you a fair profit, you should consider similar stock for replacement. However, if you're not satisfied, it should be one of the first points of reevaluation.

"Good, solid breeding stock is the foundation for any herd, whether it be commercial or purebred," Hough said. "You can easily justify spending a lot of time and effort selecting bulls. Among other things, you should select for soundness, temperament, calving ease, optimum growth, and optimum returns on dollars and time

invested."

Another important factor to examine is the quality of your pasture or rangeland. The grass produced must be of adequate quantity and quality to supply nutrient requirements with a minimal amount of supplementation. Soil tests will aid fertilizer application planning.

"Nutrient requirement will vary by age and condition of each animal, but the more of it you can produce and use with supplements will increase your overall profitability," Hough said.

Next, review the quality and type of working facilities you have. Are there low-cost easy-to-make improvements that could be added? For example, this may be the perfect time to replace your loading chute or simply replace a

few rails. Also, do your corrals need repair? If so, compare the cost of replacement to repair. With some of the new construction materials available today, it may be more cost-effective in the long run to rebuild the corral.

"Should you decide to rebuild, be sure to use the latest plans available from extension offices and agricultural firms," Hough said. "Many of the newer designs incorporate techniques that make working easier on you as well as the animal."

Hough said that your pasture, range, equipment, and facilities plans should be approached much like your breeding program — with long-term goals in mind. Once long-term goals are established, you can develop short-term goals and plans to reach them.

## Lackawanna DHIA Members Honored



SCRANTON (Lackawanna Co.) — Lackawanna County DHIA honored members with awards at their annual meeting. Left to right are Doug Johnson, Amasa Hill Farm, high cow in fat, high lifetime record in milk and fat, and purple merit award for herd management; Mark Darling, high herd in milk and fat, high cow and 2-year-old in milk, and high 2-year-old in fat; John Fron, blue merit award in herd management; and Clarence Randal of Manning Farm, red merit award in herd management.

## Farm Calendar

(Continued from Page A10)



**Monday, January 4**  
Water Rights, Water Law, and Irrigation Management meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Tuesday, January 5**  
Northwestern Pa. Forage Schools, Log Cabin Restaurant, Waterford, thru Jan. 6.

**Wednesday, January 6**  
Farm/Municipal Composting Field Days, Preston Boop's Briar Patch Farm, Mifflinburg, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Dairy MAP-Managing For Success, Family Time Restaurant, York, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., repeats Jan. 20.

**Thursday, January 7**  
Regional tomato growers meeting, Thompson's Dairy Bar, Lackawanna County, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

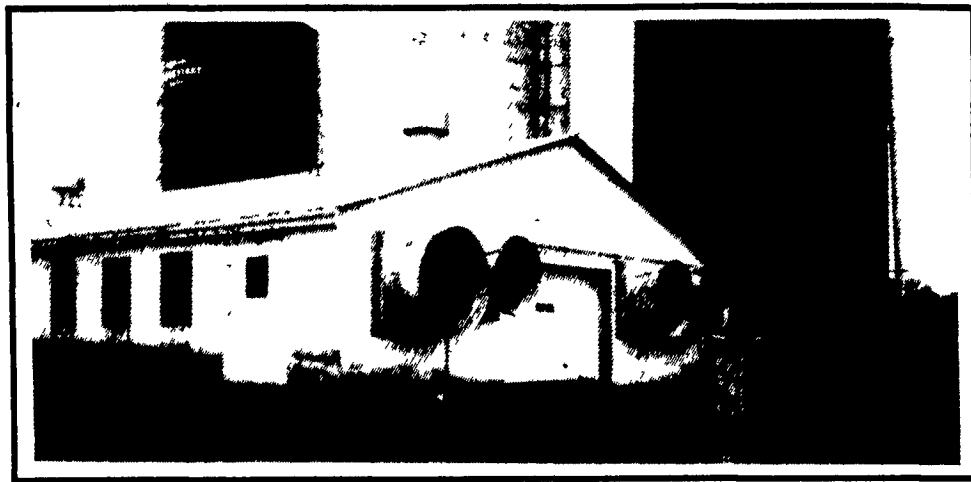
Farm Financial Management Workshop, Mahantongo Fire Company Hall, Pitman, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

**Friday, January 8**

**Saturday, January 9**  
Pa. State Farm Show, Harrisburg, thru January 14.

Leader's Conference, Lingonore United Methodist Church, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

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