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On The Farm With Pa.'s Dairy Princess

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff
STRAUSSTOWN (Berks Co.)

— Barb Grimes predicts that her daughter will be the first state dairy princess to fight to keep her crown when her title expires in September.

Eighteen-year-old Jennifer's passion for that crown is not its sparkling brilliance but what it stands for. As the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess, she represents the dairy industry and farmers — the best combination possible, according to Jennifer.

"Some people think that all we do is stand there and look pretty. Little do they know," Jennifer Grimes said when discussing the duties of dairy princesses.

"All dairy princesses — that means 36 county dairy princesses — are strong promoters of the dairy industry. The industry really is well represented this year," she said.

Jennifer told of the hundreds of hours spent handing out recipes and samples of milk, cheese, and other dairy products, of appearing at public functions to speak for the industry, and of radio and television spots.

"Soft drink companies depend upon commercials and billboards to do the advertising. The dairy industry, by using dairy princesses, has personal contact and I think the message sticks more in consumers' minds," she said.

Jennifer is no stranger to the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to produce milk for millions of Americans.

There's nothing she likes better than to dress in a flannel shirt and jeans and get out in the barn to help deliver a calf or milk a cow.

Jennifer, her parents Barb and Ken, and brother Jonathan operate a 400-acre farm in Berks County

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Passerbys can't help but notice this sign at the entrance to Cabin Creek Farm in Strausstown, where Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Jennifer Grimes works with her parents, Barb and Ken, and brother Jonathan.

Digester Technology May Save Money On Electricity, Heating

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)

— A proposal known as S.B. 439 is under review by the state Senate to construct six demonstration digesters in the state, according to representatives from various agencies headquartered here. Farmers may be able to save money on electricity and heating their farm, as well as protect their environment, by using manure digesters.

A digester is a device that collects the gas generated from

decomposing manure from a manure holding area, pit or tank. A good digester, which can cost from \$40,000-\$100,000 or more, depending on size, collects gas used to power a generator, which in turn provides heat and electricity.

Information from demonstration digesters may help farmers learn about the technology. That's the driving idea behind proposed legislation, which is now under review in the Pennsylvania Senate.

Larry Lentz, who represents the

Center for Rural Pennsylvania, an agency of the state general assembly, said S.B. 439, in committee since February this year, would pay 80 percent of the cost of six separate demonstration digesters.

Farmers who apply for the cost-share money would be required to then pay back the cost of the digester within two years, with no interest, according to the proposal. The only requirement is that the digester provide enough space to perform research and be open for view

to the general public.

Biogas Conference

Not only large-scale dairy, swine, and chicken operations can benefit immediately, but small-scale farmers can use the simple technology to generate heat for their buildings and their homes, according to farmers on a panel at the On-Farm Biogas Production Conference held Wednesday in

New Holland.

It took only three years to pay off the investment in a series of three manure digesters built from 1978 to 1980 at Mason-Dixon Farms, according to owner Richard Waybright.

Waybright invested a total of about \$250,000 (in 1993 dollars), when he was paying about \$80,000

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Lancaster DHIA Looks Good After First Year

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.

Lancaster Farming Staff
SMOKETOWN (Lancaster

Co.) — The 1,104 members of the independent Lancaster Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) have fared well in the first year since it split from the Pennsylvania DHIA, according to its leadership.

According to several speakers during Tuesday's Lancaster DHIA annual meeting, held at the Good and Plenty Restaurant in Smoke-town, their success is not a mark against the Pa.DHIA, but rather a reflection of better producer competitiveness for Lancaster DHIA members.

One of the leading dairy counties in the nation, the majority of its dairymen served to catalyze an industry-wide change in the organization of DHIA's across the nation, when it sought to abandon the state association's record processing and testing services, located in Centre County, and to seek services from a records processing center in Raleigh, N.C.

The issue was ultimately resolved through negotiations and the National DHIA, when it approved the transfer of Lancaster DHIA records from Pa.DHIA to the

Raleigh Dairy Records Processing Center (DRPC).

That move set the stage for the current situation which gives much more latitude, and longitude, to dairymen seeking a choice of services.

Bob Wenger, Lancaster DHIA president, said that the organization, which just received its status as a nonprofit corporation, had ended the year in good financial

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Christmas Deadlines

The Lancaster Farming office will be closed Friday, December 24 in observance of Christmas day. Early deadlines will be followed the week of Christmas. These deadlines are as follows:

Public Sale Ads — Noon, Mon., 12/20.

Mailbox Markets — Noon, Mon., 12/20.

General News — Noon, Wed., 12/22.

Classified Section C Ads — 5 p.m., Tue., 12/21.

All Other Classified Ads — 9 a.m., Wed., 12/22.



Mitch Ashby, auctioneer, in light jacket, center, was on hand at the start of the Lancaster County tobacco auction on Monday. About 250 tobacco growers and eight buyers turned out for the event, which had a top price of Maryland 609 tobacco at \$1.25 per pound. The price of \$1.25 held on Wednesday's auction. See story page A28.