

1993: A Year To Challenge Understanding

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Then during the summer, some areas of the state didn't receive enough rainfall for corn and some other crops to reach potential.

Medically, 1993 was historic for the life-saving operation performed on state Gov. Robert Casey.

Casey, who appeared palid and wobbled at his podium during a June 1 press conference to publicize his May 22 signing of the Nutrient Management Act, became the first governor to receive a heart and liver transplant.

Within two weeks of the mock-signing held at a Middletown dairy farm, the governor was in Pittsburgh receiving the heart and liver of a young man who had been beaten to death.

Gov. Casey went into the hospital on June 11 and had the surgery on June 14.

And, on Dec. 21 Casey returned to office, though still under constant medical care and testing.

That alone, in most previous years, may have been held as the most significant event.

But there were other significant events.

On June 22, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, in conjunction with the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee, headed by Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., held an unprecedented national dairy conference at the York County Fairgrounds.

The attempt was to determine what consensus of opinion may be within the dairy industry, as far as national policies.

The dairy industry appeared as divided as ever on which route to take to prevent the loss of the family dairy farm operation, make milk pricing more fair to the producer, and retain a producer's own decision-making independence.

However, most all in attendance said they considered the effort worthwhile.

And, milk marketing has changed. There is now Class III pricing to fit in with Class I and Class II, in order to arrive at a better blend price, more reflective of the uses of milk.

In August, the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board was reaffirmed by U.S. dairymen as an effective tool to support the marketing and sale of milk and milk products, despite a small, but vocal group of opponents based in the Midwest (The group formed in opposition to BST and called for the demise of the National Dairy

Board because it used dairy farmer funds to attempt to educate the public on the safety of milk, whether or not supplemental BST has been used.)

The situation of the national Dairy Herd Improvement Association and its affiliates has changed greatly. State borders no longer apply. Data processing centers in the East are serving dairy operations in the West.

And laptop computers are commonplace in dairy barns.

Also, on July 31, in Madison, Wis., the National DHIA and Holstein Association held its first joint session to consider ways to make the services better.

Wetlands issues and water issues garnered more public attention this past year.

Recently, a U.S. judge in the Western Pennsylvania District ruled in favor of an Erie County farmer who had been battling the Environmental Protection Agency to continue wetlands conversion on his farm that his father began under the approval and support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture more than 20 years ago.

While that decision is still open to appeal by the federal government, and its potential application to other cases may be very limited, some politicians, such as U.S. Congressman Tom Ridge, R-Erie, are calling for more changes.

Specifically, Ridge, one of many campaigning for governor of Pennsylvania, has been building a platform that calls for restructuring the state Department of Environmental Resources to eliminate mixed enforcement from the same-agency.

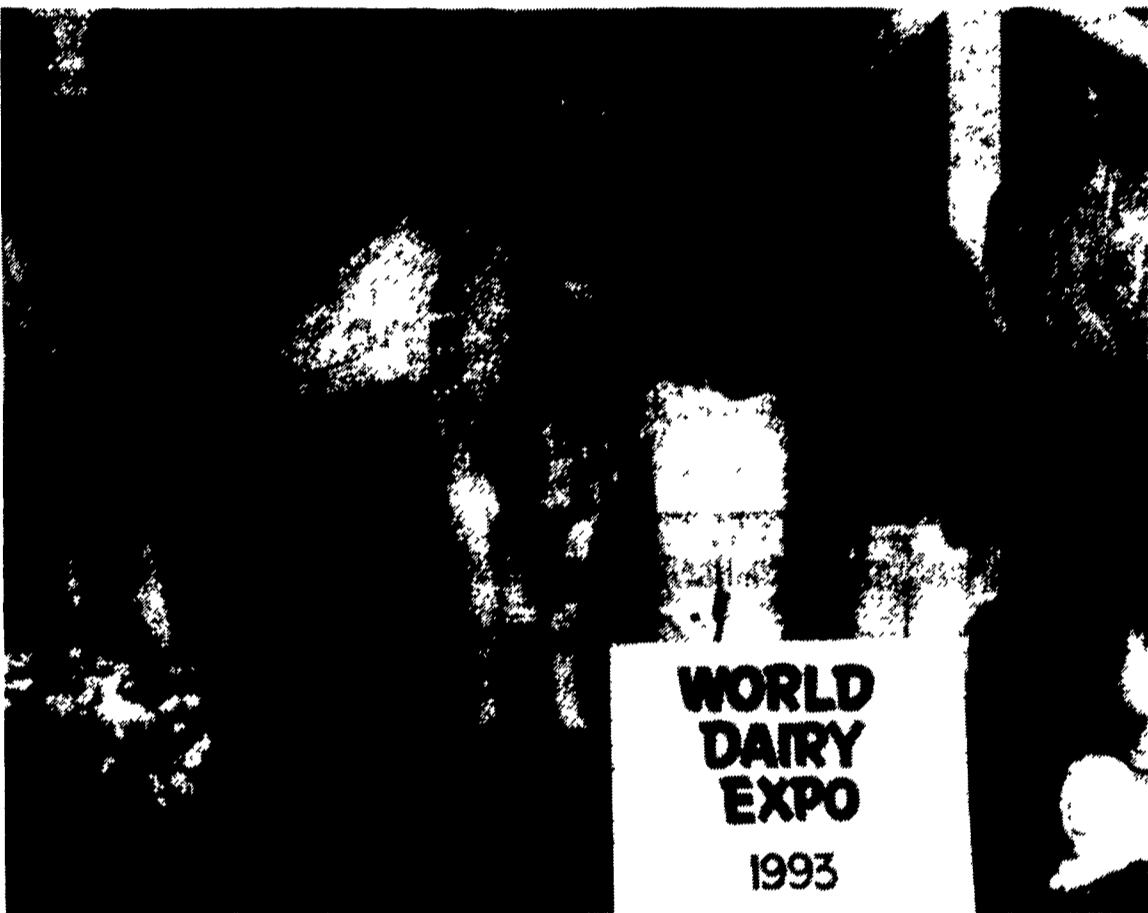
As a federal representative, he is also seeking changes in the federal Clean Water Act to make it easier for the layperson to understand the complexities of water cycles and what kinds of land protections are necessary to ensure naturally clean water.

In other areas, the domestic tobacco industry seemed to have been hurt with aggressive governmental prohibitions on public smoking and health warnings, increased taxes, and price wars. Thousands of tobacco factory workers were given pink slips this past year, seeming to end the huge influence and prosperity enjoyed by that industry, at least domestically.

The politics in Harrisburg haven't seemed to stop changing and adjusting after a relatively large slate of freshmen entered the



Falling at a rate of 4-inches per-hour, the March 13 Blizzard of the Century locked up travel and back roads for up to three days and prevented some milk from being shipped to handlers.



Robthom Suzet Paddy, a 6-year-old Holstein set a world record for verified milk production and is honored at the 1993 World Dairy Expo. From the left are owners Robert and Marlann Thomson, Nancy Thomson and daughter Laura; and Alton, Janet and son Eric Ling. Also shown is Steve Kerr, CEO of the National Holstein Association.

House and, the Senate became controlled by the Democrats.

Most recently, in the House of Representatives, the Democratic Party's majority control seems to have been threatened by some of the younger crowd switching parties and increasing the Republican ranks.

There has been almost no dairy industry reaction to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's approval of Monsanto Corp.'s commercial form of bovine somatotropin (BST), which is to be used to stimulate a lactating cow's production of milk.

Monsanto's BST, called "Posilac," is the first biotechnological product based on recombinant DNA techniques to be used directly to produce food.

There are many more biotechnological products, made by using direct genetic manipulations, that are waiting to be introduced to the public's food supply, according to a number of industry sources.

The industry awaits the public reaction.

But determining public reaction has been changing.

While it has never been easy to

ascertain the opinions of the masses, it seems to be getting more difficult because of the increasing number of self-appointed spokespersons for the general public.

It seems as though "representing" the public has become a new full-time job in the United States.

It was announced this year that there are now more than double the number of "non-profit" organizations seeking money to help support causes and ideologies than there were in the 1980s.

However, in order to determine public opinion, there is still nothing more reliable than carefully worded, unbiased, well-conducted and documented polling and research.

Achievements for 1993 are also many, depending on whom is defining the events.

From the perspective of the state Department of Agriculture (PDA), there is much to build upon in 1994 which was achieved in 1993.

State funding was allocated for a new veterinary diagnostic laboratory, and Urban Consultants Inc., of

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1993 was the year for the Pennsylvania Farmers Association to change its name to the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. Here the association's banner rides above a table of gubernatorial hopefuls during the association's annual convention in November.