



## PENNSYLVANIA DHIA TECHNICIAN TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### BACKGROUND

Over the last 15 years, information technology has become increasingly cheaper, more powerful and more flexible. Tasks that once required large mainframe data processing systems maintained by central programming staffs are now accomplished in multiple remote locations with portable hardware and software. Among the organizations most affected by these changes is the DHIA whose primary business is information management.

These technology developments have had profound effects on the employees of DHIA who deliver management information services to dairy producers. Their job responsibilities have grown more complex and demanding as they are expected to provide more varied services to more people. Added to this complexity is increasing professionalism which is prompted by NDHIA Quality Certification standards and by the conversion of the national DHIA system into a competitive marketplace.

DHIA field technicians are asked to do more today and in a better way than their predecessors of the last 20-30 years. Consequently, the need for better training is growing.

Never-the less, DHIA often has fewer resources available to train them and they struggle to provide the support and training that technicians deserve and need.

In response to this problem, suggestions were made to appoint a committee to assist the PA DHIA Board and Staff with this problem. In April, 1993, the Board approved the appointment of an advisory committee to deal specifically with this issue.

### COMMITTEE PURPOSE, STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

The advisory committee is a permanent committee responsible to the PA DHIA Board of Directors. Its purpose is:

1. To review the requirements for technician training needed to meet NDHIA certification.

2. To determine additional qualifications needed to meet the needs of the marketplace in fulfilling the mission of the association.

3. To review existing training programs for DHIA technicians and identify weaknesses in them.

4. To determine the resources needed to properly train technicians and make recommendations to the Board and Staff regarding needed changes in training programs, and in the allocation of resources to support them.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Neil McCulloch - Chairman  
Cumberland County  
Andy Meier - Co-Chairman  
Somerset County  
Beth Kelchner-Technician  
Lycoming County  
Jay Risser- Technician  
Lancaster County

Dennis Brown-Clarion County  
Dean Daubert-Clinton County  
Marion Butler-Tioga County  
Doug Johnson-Lackawanna County  
John Esh-Clinton County  
Anne Bert-Blair County  
Bill Ille-Cambria County  
Helene Driesbach-Berks County  
Dennis Kauffman-Lebanon County



Lap Top Demonstration

### Data at your Fingertips

PA DHIA Technicians continue to serve their members with the introduction of the lap tops. The electronic data entry by the technicians is the project of PA DHIA since the summer conference and additional training was held during the October Fall Conference for the technicians. Region Managers and senior technicians assist with the extra training sessions as required. 141 technicians have been assigned user id's on the mainframe system. About 93 are active-either actually released for transmission or sending parallel transmissions with paper barnsheets for comparisons. A Help Desk function to support technicians from 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. 5 days a week. With questions and problems as they occur, transmitting data to the mainframe from the farm.

Is PA DHIA the first to attempt such a project? For data entry-we're far from the first. Some DHIA's have been doing electronic data entry for approximately ten years. As of January 1, 1993 it was estimated that just under 50% of the DHI cows in the nation have their data entered electronically. However, our approach to a totally integrated program is relatively recent and something that a number of DHIA's are in the process of putting in the field.

A few of the state DHIA's have an agreement with the Dairy Comp 305 program owners, Valley Ag Software. At some point in the near future, well over 50% of the DHI cows in the nation will have access to the Dairy Comp 305 program on test day. PA Daries will begin to see reports in the

## Technicians Receive State Awards for Services

### Distinguished Service Award

Each year a list of nominees for the Distinguished Service Award is formulated. Each candidate must have completed five years of service and qualified for the Award of Merit for the previous year. One technician is chosen from each region based on the following criteria. Cooperation with county personnel, statistical performance, neatness and appearance.

Technicians may only receive this award once. It is also required that a technician win this award prior to consideration for Superior Technician. The winners each receive a plaque and check for \$25.00.

**Region 1: Lisa Kulinski,  
Lawrence County**

**Region 2: Brenda Bingenheimer,  
Bedford County**

**Region 3: John Loughner,  
Bradford County**

**Region 4: Andrew Baer,  
Lebanon County**

### Putnam Award

The Putnam Memorial Award was initiated in 1983 in honor of Dexter N. Putnam for his contributions to PA DHIA. Mr. Putnam was an extension dairy man from 1957 until his retirement in 1982. Dexter's dairy extension responsibilities included working with DHIA Technicians to improve their accuracy in reporting data on DHIA forms. The Putnam award is given annually to the technician who commits the fewest errors per 1000 cows tested. Technicians may only win this award once. The winner receives an engraved desk set.

**Full-Time: Darren Little,  
Centre County**

**Part-Time: Cheryl Gelsinger,  
Franklin County**



**YOU CAN HOLD THE  
WINNING HAND by  
joining a champion team.**

Even when the chips are down you can be confident of success if you belong to the Pennsylvania DHIA.

That's because Pennsylvania gives you the information you need to make wise management decisions.

As a member of Pennsylvania DHIA you tap into an official nationwide network of information. Pennsylvania scored a 100% in the Laboratory Services and Field Services for providing quality service and accurate, reliable results to member dairy producers. Pennsylvania is committed to their members. Spring of '94 as our technicians get more proficient at running these reports and using Dairy Comp 305.

This project is being paid for by the PA DHIA reserves for equipment and the program writing is being covered by Valley Ag Software for Dairy Comp 305. In the future, it is estimated or projected that the reduction in data entry at the DHIA Service Center at the state office will finance the on going expenses.

This is a big project and often with a project of this size they move slowly. When this project is completed it will offer data at your fingertips, and offer greater flexibility. Flexibility is needed by today's dairy farmers.

Flexibility that is needed to serve the varied needs and requests for information that is wanted by a large and diverse number of dairy farmers.

### Hollinger Award

The Carl B. Hollinger Award was started in 1977 in honor of Mr. Hollinger who was a fieldman for PA DHIA from 1954-1974. The winner of this award is selected by the employees who work in Central Milk Testing Lab, to recognize the outstanding technician for excellence in neatness and accuracy of samples and barnsheets. Criteria used in selecting the winner include order and neatness of the barnsheets, neatness in sample packing, size of samples, method of ordering supplies, and cooperation with the lab. The winner receives an engraved desk set.

**Andrew Baer, Lebanon  
County**

Pennsylvania DHIA does an excellent job of communicating with current members. Listening to their needs and shaping reports to meet their needs. We provide a full service DHIA to our members and we are the only DHIA on the Eastern U.S. to offer all to our members.

Deciding to go with Pennsylvania is a decision to be successful. Pennsylvania DHIA is active in various cooperatives and workshops. We provide workshops to our members on an individual basis or in group settings also to interested ag lenders and veterinarians and feed consultants periodically in the year. The staff is committed to providing workshop on using and understanding DHIA records.

Deciding to go with Pennsylvania is a decision to be successful. To be ahead of the game. To be a winner. Call today!

1-800-344-8378 Service Center

### Rookie of the Year

The Rookie of the Year was established to honor new technicians who have shown exceptional aptitude in learning the job of the DHIA Technician. These individuals must have worked between 6 to 18 months and demonstrate outstanding cooperation with the state and local DHIA organizations in conducting an efficient and accurate testing program. The award consists of engraved plaque. This year the field staff had a difficult choice to make since there are several very good new technicians.

**Julie Warf, Beaver County**

**Cheryl Gelsinger, Franklin  
County**