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First Time An FFA Chapter Wins Keystone Pork Bowl

Producers Could Soon See PRRS Vaccine, Says Vet At Pork Congress

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.)
— A vaccine for porcine reproduc-

tive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) will be available within the next 18 months. But for now, producers can take steps to ensure

the debilitating disease is controlled in their herds.

Three major companies are "feverishly working" on the vac-

cine, said Dr. Tom Wetzell, South Central Veterinary Associates, from Wells, Minn. On Wednesday, Wetzell told about 100 pork producers at the Keystone Pork Congress that once the vaccine is available, it will have as good an effect on controlling PRRS as the PRV vaccine had on pseudorabies.

Wetzell spoke about the history of PRRS and studies undertaken recently to understand how the virus works and methods producers can use to control it.

Increasingly, Pennsylvania herds are being tested positive for the virus in herds. The incidence of PRRS, which was once called mystery pig disease (MPD), swine infertility and respiratory syndrome (SIRS), and blue ear disease, has steadily increased in the major Midwest and southeast producing states since it was identified in 1987 by researchers in

Lelystad, Netherlands. But the disease has been in U.S. herds, based on serological evidence, since 1984.

The disease surged in herds in 1988 until methods of detection and treatment helped decrease the prevalence of the disease in the ensuing years, according to Wetzell.

The disease effects pigs from 3-8 weeks of age. "Naive herds" — those that have never tested positive for the presence of the virus — are most susceptible. In an advanced infection, sows and finishing pigs become off feed and lethargic. They develop fevers ranging from 103-107 degrees. Newborn pigs start "thumping," which is rapid, shallow breathing. There are abortions and early farrowings. Sullbirths and mummification rates rise rapidly — mortal-

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For the first time in its eight-year history, the Keystone Pork Bowl was won by an FFA chapter, Mifflinburg FFA. From left, Dave Woodling, coach; Matt Christ; Lucas Criswell; Daryl Ebersole; Derrick Moyer; and Tom Moyer, Hatfield representative.

Winter Ice Storms Hard On Cattle As Well As People

HOPE HOLLAND

Maryland Correspondent

REISTERSTOWN, Md. — The recent weeks of ice storms in Maryland have had a tragic side effect for dairy and beef cattle farmers in the area. Many of the state's veterinarians have had to spend much of their time destroying cattle that have injured themselves from falls in icy pastures.

During a conversation with Dr. William Rosenberger of the Reisterstown Veterinary Center in northern Baltimore County, he stated that he knows of at least 50 head of beef or dairy cattle that have had to be destroyed as a direct result of the ice storms that have plagued the counties that border the Maryland/Pennsylvania line.

"I've probably spent most of

my time these past three weeks just trying to get downed livestock up on their feet and back onto safe ground," he says. "Farmers are trying to use their tractors to help lift the cattle, but even the tractors can't do anything on ice that is sometimes as much as four inches thick in the fields. I had one farmer call me and ask what he could do for five cows that were just laying down out in his field and wouldn't even try to get up. He said that he had gone out to get them with the tractor, but that the tractor had spun around three times on the ice in the field and almost turned over on him! I told him that about all he could do was to put water and hay in reach of each cow and pray for a thaw!"

He went on to say, "I've had to put a few horses down from inju-

ries sustained from falls on the ice, but it's the poor cattle that are getting the worst of it."

Dr. Lee Miller of Woodsboro Veterinary Clinic in Frederick County has much the same thing to say. According to Dr. Miller,

"Horses seem to have enough muscle to sustain the shock of these falls, and, from what I've been seeing, they seem to fall on their sides. The cattle fall more awkwardly, or, even worse, do a split when they fall and suffer

injuries to their hips and pelvic bones. They seem to either break their femurs, break the socket of their hip joints, or wrench the ball out of the hip socket and dislocate their hips. I'm seeing a lot more

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Holstein Association Outlines New Classification Program

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.

Lancaster Farming Staff

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — An expanded animal classification program, among a number of other topics, was outlined last week by leaders of the national Holstein-Friesian Association of America, during a local issues forum at the Sheraton-East in Harrisburg.

The meeting was one of many held across the nation in an effort for members of the board of directors to better gauge member consensus on issues pending board action at the HFAA annual convention, scheduled to be held in Seattle during July.

Despite poor driving conditions because of continued winter storms, about 40 people from

around the state attended the all-day forum.

The forum was lead by two national directors representing the state — John Howard, of Willow Street, and Thomas Kelly, of Tyrone — and by HFAA Vice President John Cope.

Among a list of 10 major issues slated for consideration before the

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Experience Helps Dairy Recover From Fire

RANDY WELLS

Indiana Co. Correspondent

INDIANA (Indiana Co.) — In years past, Indiana County dairyman Donald Simpson has helped four other farmers rebuild their barns after they were destroyed by fire.

That experience will benefit him now.

On Saturday, Jan. 29, a flash fire leveled the 98-year-old barn on the Simpson farm — designated three years ago as a Century Farm — about three miles southwest of Indiana.

Even while his barn was still burning, concerned neighbors and other farmers pressed Simpson for a decision.

"What are you going to do?" they asked.

The neighbors realized Simpson and his wife LaRue and two sons did not have the luxury of taking a lot of time to decide what they should do first to start rebuilding the dairy business they have operated since 1968.

In just a few hours, the Simpsons' 60 head of Holsteins would need milked. Approximately 1,700 pounds of milk would need chilled and stored. And almost everything they needed to do that was buried under the smoldering debris of his barn.

Don Simpson made the decision: The cows would have to leave — at least temporarily.

And once that decision was made, dozens of other farmers and friends took over.

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Marion Center dairymen Richard and Wayne Black, center and right, offer Don Simpson some wrapped hay to replace some of the hay he lost when his barn burned Jan. 29. A barn on the Black farm burned in 1975.