

National Grassland Enthusiasts Visit Dutch Country

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In 1972 the national hay marketing task force was formed to determine methods to help find the price of forages based on feed value. And the task force also sought better packaging methods for long-distance hauling.

Another speaker on Tuesday's program, Ewing Row, managing editor, Hoards' Dairyman, said, in 10 to 20 years from now, whoever can produce milk at least cost will be in business.

"The days of support prices to keep marginal dairy farmers in business is gone," Row said. "So are the days when Uncle Sam will offer to buy everything that is produced. We're in transition now. Dairymen are solely responsible for the government support price purchases in excess of seven billion pounds of milk based on milk solids equivalent. They must pay for disposing of what will not clear the U.S. market at the current support price. Ten years from now there will be no support price."

Row said the goal for dairy farms must be to produce one million pounds of milk per worker. This may take the form of 50 cows producing 20,000 lbs. or 40 cows producing 25,000 lbs. It's not necessarily being big. It's however you can do it.

Steve Ford, forage economist, Penn State University, said efficiencies in the forage program can help address declining profits on the farm. He listed several facts that will influence profitability on the farm. They are competition from other farm areas; price variability, reduced support prices, and government regulations.

In the 60's all the farmer needed to do was be a good producer. In the 70's you needed to become a marketer. By the 80's with the farm depression, you needed to be a financial wizard. Now in the 90's you need to have systems management. Feed purchases, crop production costs, interest and labor all need to be considered in your forage system. In addition, feed losses occur between harvest and storage, between storage and feeding, and when the animals are fed.

In our forage markets, purchases are made not on feed value content but on how it smells, looks or what it weighs. "With a cow eating seven tons of forage, if you save \$20 per ton either in reduced initial cost or by reducing storage and feeding losses, you can save \$140 per cow," Ford said. "That's \$8,400 saved in a 60 cow herd."

Various tours for the women and the men were conducted throughout the three-day event. This gave the visitors an opportunity to see farming and agri-business in Lancaster County. Many technical and information subjects were also covered in seminars. Tuesday evening was Pennsylvania night, and a bountiful banquet of Pennsylvania produced foods was served in smorgasbord style, or as one farmer at the table suggested, in grazing style.

The climax of the convention was the awards banquet Wednesday night. Dr. John Moore, University of Florida, received the Medallion award. He received his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D degrees in animal science from Ohio State University. In 1961 he joined the faculty of the animal science department of the University of Florida. His teaching assignment includes graduate classes in animal nutrition and in principle of forage quality evaluation. His research emphasizes predicting the quality of tropical grasses from routine laboratory analyses, studying the relationship of forage structure and micro-anatomy to forage quality, and predicting the effect of supplemental concentrates on utilization of forages.

Two presidential citations were awarded posthumously to Jack Bartlett and Zur Craine.

Bartlett was a founder of the joint committee on grassland farming and was elected its first chairman. As head of the department of dairy science at the New Jersey Agriculture Experiment Station, he was able to see firsthand the need for more practical and better information for managing forage crops. Bartlett died in 1961 after serving for a number of years in the organization that was to become the American Forage and Grassland Council. The enduring contribution that Bartlett made to grassland agriculture was his vision and ability to develop this into a coordinated effort that sparked a greater awareness of the tremendous potential from improved forages.

Craine was one of the founders of what is now known as the American Forage and Grassland Council. He was secretary of the National Silo Association and a long-time advocate of better quality forages. In 1944, following discussions with others with the same interests, he sent out a general invitation to all interested in animal and human nutrition to attend a conference. This meeting was to deal with information on harvesting, storing, and preserving grasses, legumes, sorghums, corn, and all green crops. Craine served for 15 years as the first recording secretary of this organization before his death in 1959.

Those receiving merit awards are: J. Mike Phillips, Southwest Research & Extension Center, Hope Arkansas; Ray Hoyum, Western Ag-Minerals, Houston, Texas; Steven L. Fales, Penn State University; Jerry H. Cherney, Cor-

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Tours of Lancaster County were conducted each day for the many out of state visitors to the national convention. At the Agri-Analyst facility in Leola, George Mitchell explains the lab testing service for forages, manure, soil, and water offered to local farmers.

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