

# Dairy Future Committee Moves On Plans To Unite Industry

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committee) is all about. We want to see if farmers to consumers can find a commonality and do some things to come together.

"What is this commonality? Selling more milk.

"Will it help the dairy farmer? That's where we all come together. We need to provide support for those who are supplying the raw products," Schutjer said. "We all have different interests in this process, but we all have a common goal."

Bill Heald, Penn State, said the idea is to improve the competitiveness of the Pennsylvania dairy industry. To do this, several planning sessions were held, and a list of nine major areas of concern were compiled from a greater list of some 79 ideas gathered from the industry. The list of special emphasis is as follows: 1. Markets and market development (new products); 2. Production/technology/profitability (animal nutrition); 3. Environment/regulatory (nutrient management/water quality).

4. inputs/infrastructure (labor, cooperatives, associations); 5. Capital, finance, retirement, records; 6. Quality of life/stress/family/interpersonal relations; 7. Urban interface/off-farm/health costs-people pressures; 8.

Research and education (family farm); and 9. Management (information management, breakout of old molds).

Robert Yonkers, Penn State, told the group that efforts in other states to give a strong voice to the dairy industry have been working to increase market share for Pennsylvania's competitors.

In Wisconsin a program is chaired by their governor to give high visibility to the state's dairy industry. The governor requested \$700,000 of state money to fund the program.

Minnesota developed a roundtable discussion program that has helped pass legislation that favors the dairy industry.

And the New York dairy industry works with other New England states in the Northeast Dairy Producers Association to hold herd management conferences. They have also committed \$25,000 to fund a half position in nutrient management at Cornell University.

Yonkers listed Pennsylvania dairy industry strengths to include growing milk production (Pennsylvania is the third fastest growing state in the nation); a large processing sector; closeness to markets, and close ports to give advantage in export opportunities.

Concerns for the state dairy industry that were listed by Yonkers include a lack of industry homogeneity; a large range in size of farm dairy operations, and variable resources across the state in terms of soils and support structure. The range in the size of processors also varies from a large cheese plant to the smallest of fluid milk processors.

The dairy industry in Pennsylvania competes regionally in the fluid milk market with New York and the New England states. In manufacturing, competition is more nationally focused on Wisconsin, California and Texas. Internationally, Pennsylvania dairy farmers compete with New Zealand and the European Community.

Robert Reich, Northeast Farm Credit, presented the vision and mission statements prepared by the committee. They are:

### VISION STATEMENT

The Pennsylvania Dairy Industry Future Committee aims to unite various individuals and organizations in a common effort to benefit the dairy industry. The committee seeks to develop direction and leadership commitment that will improve the profitability and the public image of the Pennsylvania dairy industry.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Pennsylvania Dairy Industry Future Committee's purpose is to have all segments of the dairy industry work together to define and advance the interests of the statewide dairy industry. The committee seeks to:

- develop leadership, commitment, and common direction in the Pennsylvania dairy industry
- recognize the interdependence of the various segments of the Pennsylvania dairy industry and the need for collective actions to address common issues and concerns; and
- communicate to the industry and the public at large the importance of the Pennsylvania dairy industry to the Commonwealth.

Reich said the committee concluded that Pennsylvania needs a facilitator or a body that can take items of common interest and project a united position.

Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County dairy agent, said the committee formed the seed for this idea. Where the seed germinates and grows is dependent on the stakeholders in the dairy industry. "We went through the development of the vision, mission and objectives for the committee to try to focus and condense some of the issues,"

Shirk said. "Hopefully with this done, the impetus will be there to get something done."

"The mechanism to do this is the forum to be held in June at Penn State. The spirit of the forum is to help unify the industry, focus on key issues of public concern, and provide a basis for unified action. The committee was very concerned that this is not just another meeting. We want it to produce action."

In the afternoon, small roundtable discussion groups helped develop several areas of most concern to be part of the forum program.

Included in these recommendations were a focus on the business climate in the state that may help processors to locate here. In addition, the development of the dairy industry image, both internally and externally, was placed high on the agenda. And support of the Dairy Map program developed at Penn State for management input for dairy farms was given top priority by the planning group as a program in place that can help dairy farmers immediately.

Stan Curtis, Penn State, chaired the meeting.

## Pasture Conference Set

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — In recent years, the more intensive utilization of pasture by dairy and livestock producers has gained in popularity. Like any other agricultural practice, sound management decisions are required for successful pasture managers. The basic of all pasture decisions must be built upon sound agronomic principals.

Pasturing 101 is a pasture conference that will provide a better understanding of pasture management. Topics such as plant growth, improving pasture productivity, alternative species, pas-

ture profits, and quality factors will be addressed. Featured speakers include Dr. Jerry Jung, USDA Pasture Research Lab, State College, Pa.; Dr. Marvin Hall, Penn State forage specialist; Duane Pysher, SCS grassland management specialist; and Paul Craig, Dauphin County extension agent.

Pasturing 101 will be held on Tuesday, March 22, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Building. There is a \$15 registration fee.

For additional information, contact your local extension office or call (717) 921-8803.

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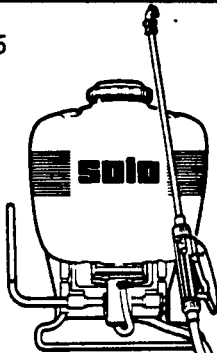

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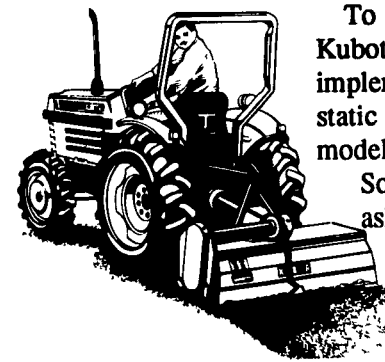
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