

ABC Honors Extension Agent Duncan

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The Atlantic Breeders Cooperative held its annual business meeting Wednesday at the Eden Resort and Convention Center in Lancaster, honoring Cumberland County Extension Agent Duane Duncan for his support and 35 years of service.

The group held its business meeting during a morning session and, in the afternoon, board President James Kreider presented Duncan a plaque in appreciation of his efforts toward cooperative education.

Duncan said he and his wife Donna, who has helped him greatly over the years, were also appreciative of the cooperative for its consistent support of Extension programs.

"I always looked to Atlantic as a key sponsor of Extension programs," Duncan said. "When I think of statewide programs or state judging contests over the years, Atlantic has always been there and I'm thankful for the opportunity to work with the Young Cooperator program."

Duncan is a native of Erie County, who started working in Extension in 1958 in Adams County as an assistant agent after receiving a degree in agricultural education from Penn State that year.

In 1967, he moved to fill the position in Cumberland County. He also has been secretary of the Pennsylvania Junior Dairy Show almost every year since 1973. Further, he developed and is currently superintendent of the All-American Dairy Judging Forum, held during the annual All-American Dairy Show in Harrisburg.

"Duane has provided Cumberland County farmers with opportunities to participate in educational in-depth programs, such as milking schools and nutrition schools for dairymen, as well as programs, such as milking schools and nutrition schools for dairymen, as well as programs for veterinarians, and ag business personnel," Kreider said.

"He has also organized dairy breeding and reproductive management clinics and workshops in DHIA records and dairy farm busi-

ness analysis. His activity in the 4-H program has been exceptional, with the development of a strong county program and with major activities at the state level," Kreider said.

Kreider also mentioned Duncan's numerous professional honors, and state regional and national awards from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents specifically in the areas of public relations, communications, and for distinguished service.

Duncan and his wife also act as coordinators for the county dairy princess group and other counties in statewide functions.

Kreider also praised Duncan, "... for his exceptional dedication to the cooperative way of doing business, and cooperative education. He has taken a very active role in local cooperative education program for teenagers and young farmers.

"Likewise, Duane and his wife Donna have been instrumental in the development and ongoing programming for the Young Cooperative Leaders Conference sponsored by the Pennsylvania Council of Cooperatives."

In addressing the group, Duncan joked that he was a 100-percent ABC user, because when he was growing up he used ABC service for his one and only heifer.

In other business, cooperative chief executive officer Harry Roth told the group that, while the cooperative had a better year financially last year than the previous year, and that exports of semen and nonmember business was increased, the cooperative faces a number of challenges in understanding its role in the future.

Roth said that in his time with the cooperative, there have been very few years that didn't present change. He said 1993, with the extremes of weather and natural disaster in every region of the country, "... certainly was an exceptional year in many respects.

"We are seeing a continual shift of cow numbers from one area to another and again have seen a reduction of cows in the Northeast with approximately 12,000 less cows in Pennsylvania than a year ago. In spite of this loss, we have again seen an increase of technician services, but a slight decrease

in direct herd units.

"As cows continue to shift into more concentrated areas, we will see larger herds and more challenges in dealing with the environmental constraints."

According to Roth, cooperative members selected bulls rated 25 percent above the average of active sires. "This is making genetic improvements at an unprecedented pace," he said.

Furthermore, employees of the cooperative all have been participating in training programs to better their skills in service, genetics, reproduction and sales.

"We maximized efficiencies of operations this year in every way possible. Technician units were consolidated in central and western Pennsylvania to adjust to member market changes and in order to improve labor efficiency by breeding more cows per technician," Roth said.

He said that specifically, a pilot program of once-a-day breeding services, as compared to twice-a-day, seems to be providing similar reproductive successes, as well as reducing member costs for service.

He also discussed the new programs offered this year, including a computer record service, and a heifer mating service.

The cooperative realized a higher profit in 1993 over 1992, Roth reported. He said that total net for 1992 was \$396,343, while it was \$434,656 for 1993. He also said that changes in taxes paid was reflected in this difference, as well as a substantial increase in non-member sales.

In international sales, Roth said that sales have been doing well, and that the Federated Council, of which ABC is a partner with other A.I. cooperatives, is "... closely monitoring the activity in the international marketing to insure our best position for the immediate and long-term needs."

Related to this, he said there are some major issues to consider.

"The global scene is changing. In the near future, we will be involved with European countries marketing their genetics in our member area. Our decision will need to determine how this will be accomplished. The world is getting smaller.

"Other countries who have pur-



From the left, James Kreider, president of the Atlantic Breeders Cooperative Board of Directors, presents a plaque to Duane Duncan, Cumberland County Extension agent, for 35 years of service to the dairy industry.

chased semen from us over the years, and have improved their herds, have also learned about our technology and service programs. This is little differences between U.S. cooperative A.I. programs and programs in other parts of the globe," he said.

Closer to home, Roth talked about the technological changes to dairying, and the competitive differences.

"Yes, the family farm is being challenged as we have known it. Size and efficiency seem to be the words today that tend to push farmers into doing things out of their comfort zone and into methods of operation never before considered.

"Many reasons are causing this change in the rural scene, and no doubt will continue to move us until other pressures take over.

"All of this change in the dynamics of a farmer's life will cause him, without a doubt, to view the services he purchases for his operation from a changing perspective. We have already seen a very dramatic change in a mem-

ber's view toward a cooperative from the time I was a boy back in Northampton County.

"Then farmers were eager to make a cooperative survive. Now the cooperative has the responsibility to deliver the product at a price and in a package to fit the member's need today."

However, Roth said there is no question in his mind that the cooperative can continue to provide its purpose as long as its leaders are cognizant of its members' needs.

"This requires leadership that is in touch with reality," he said.

While praising the existing leadership, Roth said future leaders must be "highly ethical people who are well grounded in cooperative philosophy in order to reach the first pinnacle of success. They must be trustworthy and willing to agree with the 'members-first' principle."

He also outlined a number of characteristics of what he considered to be good leadership qualities.

Eastern Milk Delegates Approve \$274.9 Million Budget

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Some 200 delegates and officers representing the 3,200 member farm families of Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative unanimously approved an operating budget calling for \$262.4 million in milk sales and nearly half a million dollars in profits after payouts to members.

The budget is for the 1994-95 fiscal year which starts April 1. Approval came at Eastern's March Delegate Meeting in Corning, N.Y.

The 71-year-old, Syracuse-based dairy cooperative expects to market nearly 2 billion pounds of milk in the new fiscal year, noted Eastern General Manager Michael Donovan.

Board President Lewis Gardner said the budget also called for an additional \$12.5 million in revenues through subsidiary sales and other income, bringing total projected revenues to \$274.9 million.

Gardner said the farmers heard reports on the co-op's two wholly owned subsidiaries, Eastern Best

Products and Eastern Laboratory Services; and voted to reinforce the co-op's neutral stance on bovine somatotropin (BST), the protein hormone used to increase milk production in lactating cows.

EASTERN BELT PRODUCTS: With a new general manager at the helm, Eastern Best spent the last three months evaluating its service and products.

The subsidiary, after surveying customers, installed a toll free line to take orders, and decided to focus on its "mainstay — quality agricultural products", including farm supplies, and dairy and other food items, Eastern Best General Manager Fred Greenfield reported.

"We've implemented a program of a commitment to quality," he said, "and a slogan of 'it's a matter of pride'."

"Pride," Greenfield said, "is a two-way street. We want members and employees to be proud of Eastern Best, just as Eastern Best is proud to be part of Eastern Milk and proud to serve members and other customers."

Eastern Best is a Canton, Pa.-based bulk-buying service bringing over 200 products to some 30,000 rural customers in a dozen states.

Headquartered in Waverly, N.Y., Eastern Lab was started nearly a decade ago as a milk testing facility serving the cheese plant owned by Eastern Milk and operated by Leprino Foods. After experiencing steady growth in dairy and food testing, the lab branched out into environmental testing about three years ago.

In 1993, environmental sales took off like a rocket, General Manager Sherry Perry reported. For the first time, environmental sales outpaced its dairy and food testing business, she said. Overall sales more than doubled in 1993, she said, due mostly to environmental testing involving drinking water, waste water, and solid and hazardous waste.

The lab positioned itself for growth and competitive pricing, she noted, by purchasing the highly specialized equipment and other assets of Reading Environ-

mental Lab. Eastern Lab has maintained a solid and hazardous waste testing facility in Reading, Pa., since June.

In other business, delegates:

--Voted to reinforce Eastern's neutral policy on the farm use of BST. "Our policy neither encourages nor discourages its use," President Gardner told delegates. "I think it's a responsible policy... Otherwise, we're sending the wrong message to consumers at a time when dairy products already are the most strictly tested and regulated products in the supermarket."

--Encouraged the board and management to pursue and support a multiple component pricing system for Federal Orders 1 and 2 (New England, New York, New Jersey and part of Pennsylvania).

--Approved a change in the dues and equity structure which results in a net decrease of one cent per hundredweight that farmers pay to be members of the co-op.

--Endorsed the policy of penalizing members who contribute to

the loss of a U.S. Public Health rating for a unit of farmers.

--Asked the board to consider redeeming old \$500 special equity certificates.

--Endorsed the practice of bloc voting by the co-op.

--Welcomed Ethel Paulhamus as a newly elected member of the board and expressed sympathy for the loss of her husband, Dale, who died earlier this year.

Prior to the start of the business portion of the two-day Delegate Meeting, delegates and their families toured the mozzarella cheese plant in Waverly, N.Y., which is operated by Leprino Foods and owned by Eastern Milk under a joint venture arrangement. The plant can consume up to 2 million pounds of milk a day as it produces Italian cheeses for a significant portion of the nation's pizza eateries and other restaurants. Then the farmers visited the Eastern Laboratory across the street from the plant. After the tour, they were treated to a giant pizza party at the Guthrie Inn in nearby Sayre, Pa.,