

Lancaster Farming

Vol. 40 No. 4

60¢ Per Copy

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, December 3, 1994

Four Sections

\$21.00 Per Year

Planning For Future Key For These Susquehanna County Farmers



Located in the shadows of Elk Mountain, a popular ski resort, provides the Wilmots with a spectacular view, however the pressures of development are getting greater each year.

Editor's Note: Every year several hundred Pennsylvania dairy farms go out of business. Changing times make incorporating sound management technologies important for the efficiency and profitability of dairy farm businesses.

In an effort to respond to the need for up-to-date business management information, many dairy industry officials and organizations have turned to Penn State's Dairy-MAP program as one way to help stabilize and reverse the downward trend of the dairy industry in Pennsylvania.

This is the first of three farm interviews with family members who have participated in one of the Dairy-MAP seminars held across the state last year.

CAROLYN N. MOYER
Bradford Co. Correspondent

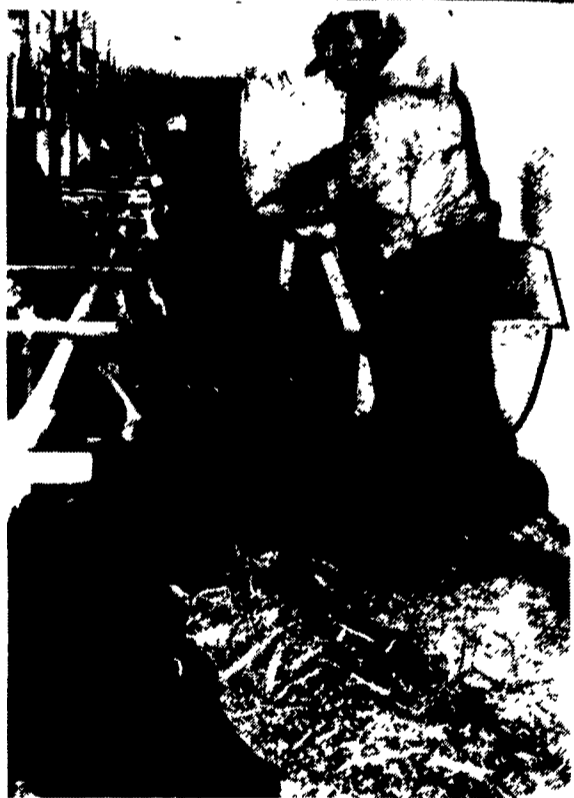
CLIFFORD TOWNSHIP (Susquehanna Co.) — For Mark and Sandy Wilmot, farming on top of a hill has its rewards. The biggest plus is the incredible view. But when that hill is also home to Elk Mountain Ski Area, there are unique challenges to overcome.

When Mark was young, he can remember when the area was full of farms. Slowly, the active farms have disappeared. When the Wilmots were married in 1967, there were about 50 farms in the area. By the time the dairy buyout took place there were only 18. Today the number has dropped to about one dozen.

(Turn to Page A22)



Sandra Wilmot feeds the calves. A graduate of the Dairy-MAP program, Sandra says she would recommend the program to others, especially young farmers.



Mark Wilmot prepares to feed their 45 milking Holsteins. All forages are tested frequently and the top dress balanced accordingly.

National DHIA Rules To Change, Testing Options Broaden

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Two major aspects of testing the production of dairy cattle in the United States are being considered for change in 1995.

According to Phil Dukas, manager of the National Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) Inc., headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, and reports published in the organization's newsletter for DHIA leaders, rules governing the records collecting process, as well as subsequent changes to the data-collection options are set for change in 1995.

Although specifics are to be discussed and worked out during late winter and spring, Dukas said that for several years a call for rules changes has been growing from member-producers and local DHIA leadership.

The major thrust of change is to evaluate rules on the

basis of emphasizing information over enforcement.

The recipient of the information can then decide if certain herd or cow records are useful and accurate.

According to the newsletter report, there are three major reasons for such a change: one is related to the legal costs involved with DHIA's serving in an enforcement capacity; another reason is because of the increased flow of information to allied industry; and the other reason has to do with the use of computer technology and the uses of records information by numerous other agencies.

In essence, the rules changes sought would free DHIA's from having to serve as the "integrity police" for the industry, and thus release the organization from being involved in specific legal battles in questionable situations.

The concept for change includes shifting responsibility for determining accuracy of an individual producer's

reported data to those organizations which use the data.

Some of those organizations include the various breed organizations, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the artificial insemination industry.

This means those other organizations are going to have to figure out what data they can use from what the farmer can afford to have collected. At the same time, the farmer will have to figure out what kind of testing program he needs to have his data qualify for consideration by outside groups.

This is expected to eliminate a significant amount of legal liability for DHIA member-fraud, costs tied up in appeals and civil suits, and the other associated costs which are currently being shouldered by all members, the majority of whom are honest, Dukas said.

(Turn to Page A25)