

Tioga County Dairy Day Educational

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WHITNEYVILLE (Tioga Co.)

— Although the crowd was small, those who attended Tioga County Dairy Day at the Tioga County Fairgrounds in Whitneyville found the sessions worthwhile. The topics GATT and NAFTA, dairy cattle worming and vaccination practices, freestall barn design and bedding, comparing New Zealand and Pennsylvania pasture management, crop insurance, DHIA computer formats and ARIS enlightened, as well as educated, the crowd.

Milton Hallberg, a professor of agriculture economics from Penn State University, discussed the purpose of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement, and how they affect farmers worldwide, as well as Pennsylvania farmers in particular.

According to Hallberg, factors affecting international trade include domestic price support policy, inflation rates, world demand conditions, and global operations of food manufacturers.

"We are now exporting more high-volume products and less bulk products like wheat and corn, and that's all due basically to the changing world demand conditions."

One of the primary questions asked concerning GATT and NAFTA is: Why should we in agriculture be interested in international trade?

Hallberg explained, "Since 1950, (the U.S.) has had a fairly steady uptrend in agriculture exports." He contends that is a value to farmers because as those exports have gone up, so too, have the gross farm income per farmer steadily risen. While the average

farm today is certainly larger than it was 40 years ago, Hallberg stressed he believed it is not the only reason for the increase in gross farm income.

"The point is," said Hallberg, "that increasing agricultural trade had put us in a position for increased farm incomes."

"Twenty-three countries established GATT in 1947 to reduce tariffs and other trade barriers and to encourage global economic growth and development, which, at least in theory, in turn should lead to increased demand in agricultural products."

"GATT provided a code of conduct for international commerce and a framework for periodic multilateral negotiations," said Hallberg.

He considers trade a long-term issue, so it must be looked at over a long-term period. "No single trade agreement will result in overnight magic," he said.

While grain farmers are likely to experience a positive effect from GATT, with a projected increase of 8 to 12 percent for wheat, 11 to 15 percent for rice, 6 to 9 percent for corn, and 5 to 9 percent for soybeans (with gross farm receipts slightly higher in those areas), the dairy farmer's increase is only projected to increase a maximum of 2 percent (3 percent in gross farm receipts).

According to Hallberg, over the long term, this imbalance in increased prices may force some farmers to go out of business. Those farmers should be encouraged to look into industries that will be expanded due to freer trade. Ultimately, this expansion will lead the nation's producers to shift from the less efficient commodities to those that are more cost efficient to produce.

Continuing to address the com-

plex topic of free trade, Hallberg said, "In 1988, the U.S. negotiated a free trade agreement with Canada. So in a sense, the Mexican-Canadian-U.S. agreement was a natural extension of the Canadian-U.S. free trade agreement."

"Another change of significance in agricultural trade, for the U.S., at least, is that we are now exporting a higher proportion of our commodities to Latin America."

In conclusion, Hallberg stressed that some of the expected gains from these agreements are: production efficiencies in the different countries will increase, we won't have to subsidize the production of commodities which we don't have a comparative advantage, and consumers will now have access to cheaper imports of certain commodities. "All of these things taken together mean that incomes should rise. As incomes rise, demand for products should increase, and that, in turn, will cause prices to increase."

Eric Kolver, a dairy farmer from New Zealand with a background in research, shared his insights on dairy farming practices in his native country compared to Pennsylvania.

New Zealand's climate is similar in range from San Francisco to Seattle. The average farm in New Zealand is family operated with 160 cows on 155 acres. While many farms have Holsteins and Jerseys within the same herd, the most popular cow in New Zealand is a cross-breed of a Holstein and Jersey.

Much of the milk produced in Kolver's country is converted into milk products that are exported, with milk prices varying from \$3.30 to \$5.50 per hundredweight, with a herd average of 7070 pounds of milk.

"(Another) cost affecting our dairy industry," said Kolver, "is that good dairy land goes for about 3 to 5 thousand dollars an acre."

Farmers in New Zealand incorporate a pasture system for feeding because grain is too costly. Having developed a business-like attitude to survive, according to Kolver, farmers in his country look to lower their on-farm costs. That means minimum use of expense like labor and machinery.

Utilizing pasture for ultimate efficiency, Kolver said farmers dry off their entire herd during the summer which is New Zealand's dry season. This method is com-

patible with the herd, because both pasture and herd are in their lowest production mode.

In other topics at Tioga County Dairy Day, important crop insurance facts were provided by Sherry Elder, Director of the Tioga County Farm Service Agency and Don Johnson of Wingate Insurance; herd health issues by County Agent J. Craig Williams and Dr. Larry Hutchinson, Extension Veterinarian from Penn State, and DHIA computer formats by DHIA area representative Diane McIlwain and DHIA tech support Dan Smith.

Dr. William George Assumes Del-Val Presidency

DOYLESTOWN — Dr. William L. George secured his place in the history books Wednesday, February 1, 1995, when he opened his term as the tenth President of Delaware Valley College.

At an assembly held in his honor, Faculty, Staff, Students, Administration and Trustees welcomed Dr. George back to the Doylestown area. George, a member of the Delaware Valley College class of 1960, has spent the past ten years as the Associate Dean and Director of Academic Programs in the College of Agriculture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Prior to his return to Delaware Valley College, Dr. George spent two weeks serving as a consultant to the Government of Uganda, currently in the process of establishing an agricultural university, and with officials from Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya.

Dr. George enters the Delaware Valley College Presidency at a time of great enthusiasm for the future. The College is preparing to honor its Centennial in 1996, with celebrations of the past and improvements for the future. Currently the College has 1,341 full-time day students, coming on the heels of the two largest enrollment classes in its history and an additional 1,020 continuing education students enrolled in Evening Division courses. The College's new residence hall opened January 20th, as plans for further campus improvement follow their prescribed course.

"I am ready to begin," Dr.



Dr. William L. George

George stated, as he met with members of the College Community on his first day in office. "I really am looking forward to getting involved with, and getting to know all of you."

Fruit Growers To Meet

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) — The Lancaster County Fruit Growers Association will hold its annual banquet here at the Country Table Restaurant on Thursday, March 9, at 6:30 p.m.

Cost is \$13 per person. Guest speaker will be Jay Irwin, retired Lancaster County extension director, who will speak about "The Farmers Of Romania."

Reservations are necessary by March 1 to Beth Rohrer, (717) 898-2748 or Romaine Erb, (717) 569-5125.

Pennsylvania Tobacco Growers Association

Post Office Box 645, Federal Square Station, Harrisburg, PA 17108-0645

Tobacco Grower Meeting

THE 1995 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PENNSYLVANIA TOBACCO GROWERS ASSOCIATION WILL BE HELD:

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH, 1995
PARADISE TOBACCO AUCTION BARN
BEGINNING AT 9:00 A.M.

GROWING TRANSPLANTS USING THE FLOAT SYSTEM

Growing Tobacco Transplants using the float system has become very popular in southern tobacco growing regions.

This year the educational program will be presented by Dr. W. David Smith, extension tobacco specialist at North Carolina State University. Dr. Smith has been active in tobacco research since 1978. He began looking at the greenhouse for transplant production in 1982, and has been working with the float system since 1984. He will be discussing the advantages of the float system and how best to manage the production of transplants. He will also be talking about the control of tobacco diseases and insects during the transplanting process.

- > Coffee and Donuts
- > Annual PTGA Business Meeting
- > Tobacco Industry Representative
- > Legislators and Guest Speakers
- > Free Lunch
- > Pesticide Credit Course (afternoon)

NOTICE: THIS IS CORRECT DATE FOR THE MEETING. DISREGARD DATES IN FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER.

All Pennsylvania Tobacco Growers Are Invited!
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