

Atlantic Locals Hold Annual Meeting

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, February 18, 1995-A19

EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

MT. JOY (Lancaster Co.) — "The dairy farmer has five things to sell: fat, protein, water, cows, and the farm. The farmer who sells the first three successfully gets to keep the last two."

With this quote, Amy Esben-shade, Lancaster County dairy princess, opened the after-lunch presentations at the annual meeting of Atlantic Dairy's Donegal and Lititz locals of District seven. Amy said it is getting more difficult to be a farmer because farmland is being "gobbled up by big-time developers." She said her home farm has been in the family for 125 years, but even with the surrounding development "we intend to keep it at least that many more years."

"Sticker shock" was what Amy called the price of buildings, silos, computers, and milking and cooling equipment. She listed a free stall barn for 400 cows at \$339,527; two bunker silos at \$75,782; computers and software, \$3,500, and milking cooling equipment at \$218,655 for a grand total

of \$1,631,029.

"Still, we are hanging on," she said. "The American farmers are learning how to manage their land to provide food for people every day. I have tremendous pride knowing I am part of the world's most indispensable industry that provides the basic necessities of life. Agriculture forms the backbone of our entire earth, and that's something I want to continue to be part of."

Tom and Shirley Krall, young cooperators couple, reported on their activities and recommended others take the opportunity to apply.

Rhelda Royer, director, reported on a number of activities for the cooperative:

- The age for young cooperators couples has been raised to 40 years-old.

- A \$500 scholarship is now available for each district to give to a student, son or daughter of a member producer, for any field of study, not just ag or home economics.

The Hershey Foods deal has



Winners of quality premium awards. From left, Rhelda Royer, director, presents awards to Mary and Paul Sauder, and Orpha and John Peters. The Peters' son and daughter-in-law, Dennis and Nancy, are also part of the farming operation.

been completed with 480 shippers to Hershey, choosing to become Atlantic members. This brings total cooperative membership to

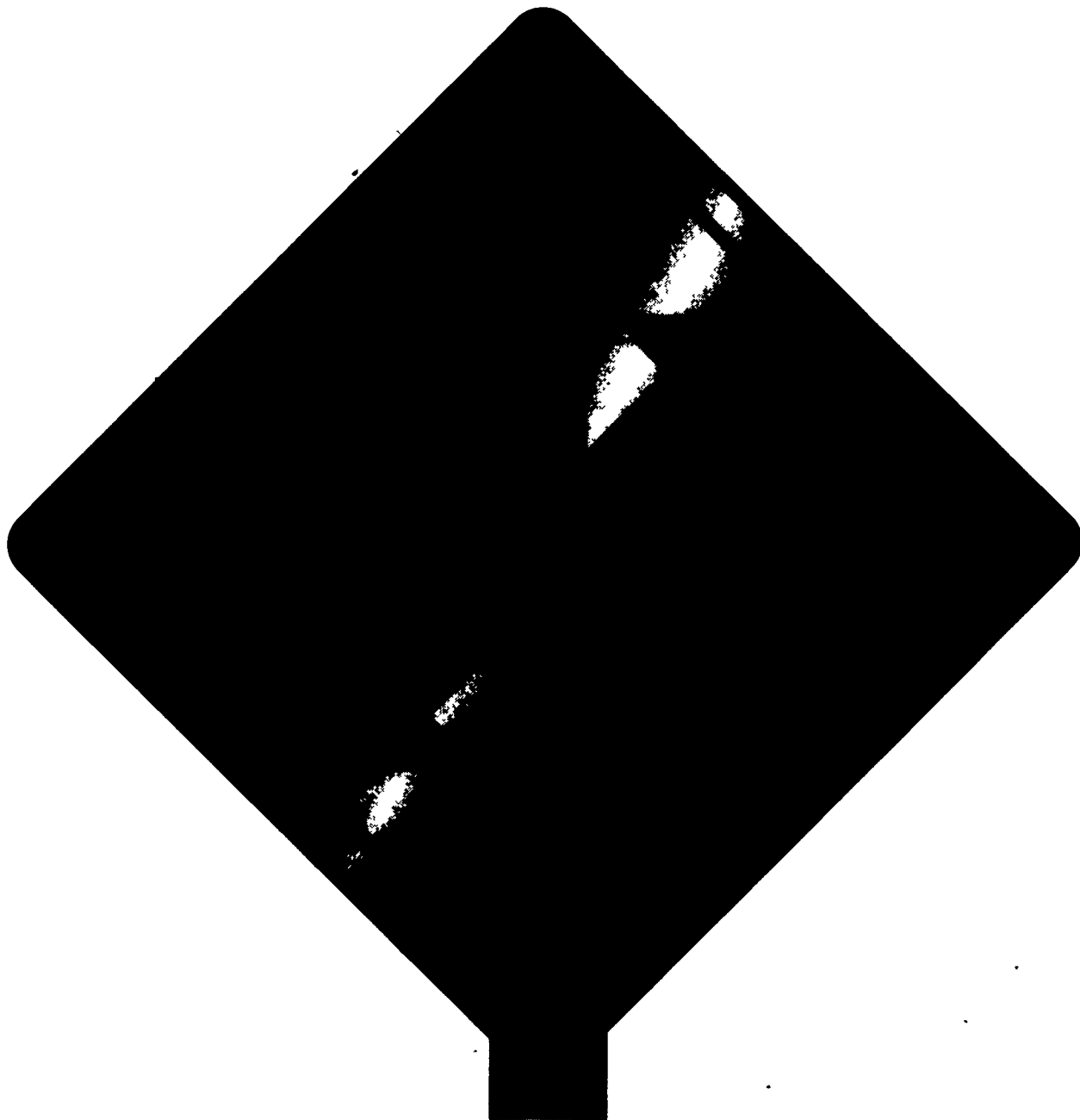
3,911, including 189 patrons.

The *Communicator* cooperative publication will go from a monthly to a quarterly—January, April, July,

and October.

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Atlantic Cooperative's bottom line increased to over \$7 million in 1994 from over \$5 million in 1993.

Robert McSparran, president, Atlantic Dairy, said the cooperative's board aimed to be good stewards of your money and make all the profit we can. He said members were the mainstay of the cooperative and deserved the most consideration. However, the people who handle the milk, the milk dealers also deserve consideration. It's the cooperative's responsibility to furnish these handlers milk every day as they want it or to divert it somewhere else and try to get as much money out of the market place as possible.

McSparran said butter has suddenly become popular. In addition, the increase in exports and the excessive rains in California contributed to the rise in the cheese price. He called the price rise temporary but said even though production was up, sales have been up also. In fact, since the approval of BST, milk sales have continued to show a slight increase in consumption.

He said the quality premium and over-order premiums were good for members but said the over-order premiums were not guaranteed. While the cooperative works with neighboring cooperatives to bargain for over-order premiums, the work is being done only on a regional basis, and movement from western markets to the East would continue to put pressure on our markets. But right now the cooperative is the only organization in the nation to pay over-order

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