

ATLANTA, Ga. — The economic impact of treating cows with recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST) to increase milk production is so similar to previous dairy industry innovations that few new federal policy approaches are needed to cope with the changes wrought by the new hormone technology.

So said Dr. M. C. Hallberg, Penn State professor of agricultural economics, and Dr. R. F. Fallert, former senior economist, livestock, dairy and poultry branch, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Fallert, who retired from USDA Jan. 1, presented the paper, "rBST,

Federal Dairy Policy and the Future of the U.S. Dairy Industry" Feb. 18 at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting, held in Atlanta, Ga.

The two agricultural economists reviewed the most recent studies of the consequences of rBST use; applied the results to federal policy on dairy farm structure, price supports, consumer education and job training; and reached several conclusions.

In its effect on dairy farm structure, "rBST is just one more technology like many preceding it that continue to encourage the consolidation of small and medium-sized

dairy farms into larger and larger units."

Larger farms could be a problem if one or a few significantly impact the market, they wrote. However, they added, "We do not see this as a problem currently anywhere in the country. Indeed, we do not see this as a remote possibility for the foreseeable future."

Hallberg and Fallert also said larger farms and herds "may lead to environmental conflicts of a local nature but we do not see this type of structural change leading to significant environmental problems nationally."

On the social costs of the dis-

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**Dauphin County DHIA**

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Club President Mike Miller, Harrisburg provided leadership for this event.

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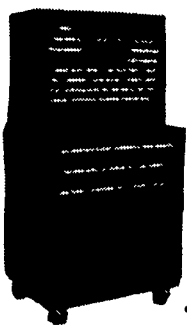
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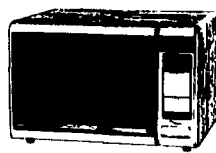
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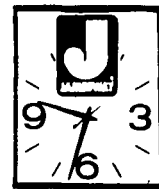
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