

**DAIRY ISSUE
SPECIAL
REPORT**

**PROFESSIONAL
DAIRY MANAGERS
OF PENNSYLVANIA
MEET TO STUDY
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

Peter Wright
Animal Waste
Specialist
Cornell
Cooperative Extension

The Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania continue to meet and grow in focus and purpose. Cliff Hawbaker, a dairy farmer from Chambersburg, leads the group. The last quarterly meeting was hosted by Dan Mains at Mains Acres dairy near Newville.

Attending dairy managers were treated to a walking tour and discussion of farm management, manure management, and milk

hauling. After the tour and discussion, the group retired to the home farm office for lunch and a presentation by Peter Wright from Cornell University, a position partially funded by the Northeast Dairy Managers.

Peter Wright summarized the day's discussion and his presentation by e-mail:

Manure Management

Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania, Mains Acres, Newville, met April 27, 1995.

One of the biggest challenges facing dairy farmers today is handling their manure in a low cost, efficient and environmentally friendly way. Often manure systems consist of tradeoff between these goals.

There are many manure handling options for the farmer to

choose from and often each farm needs the equipment and management skills to handle manure in a variety of ways.

A small group of dairy managers explained how they each dealt with the manure on their farms. They shared their successes and their problems in dealing with this important issue.

Peter Wright, manure management specialist from Cornell, gave his perspective of the problem and the opportunities.

The lowest cost system is often daily spreading, especially for smaller farms.

The disadvantages of daily spreading include compaction of the cropland while spreading in saturated conditions, unavailability of land during the growing season, and nutrient losses when manure is spread over the winter.

Larger farms will find that storing the manure, in an earthen storage, and then irrigating it is the lowest cost method. The disadvantages of this method include odors from the stored manure are released as the manure pit is agitated and as the manure is sprayed into the air, pumping to non contiguous land is difficult, and higher management is needed.

Environmentally the best systems include soil and manure analysis, timing manure application so it is applied as close as possible to when the nutrients are needed, applied at the correct rate, and applied evenly like fertilizer should be applied. Incorporation of the manure as it is applied or immediately after will retain the ammonia as additional nitrogen fertilizer.

An added benefit with incorporation is the reduction of odors. The draghose system of pumping the manure to a flexible hose that is dragged behind the tractor and a tillage implement has the potential to provide these advantages.

There are additional compo-

nents such as liquid solid separation, methane generation, and satellite storage that were discussed. These components need to be developed to meet the needs of the dairy industry.

The next meeting of the PDM of Pa. will be July 27 in Carlisle to study milk hauling and contracting. Dairy managers that have questions regarding the PDM of Pa. should contact Cliff Hawbaker (717) 263-9577, Franklin County; Greta Rech (610) 869-8116, Chester County; or Janice Burkholder, Franklin County, (717) 263-9690.

If a local group wishes to start another regional dairy managers group in the state, they should contact Bill Heald at (814) 863-3918 or CWH3@PSU.EDU.



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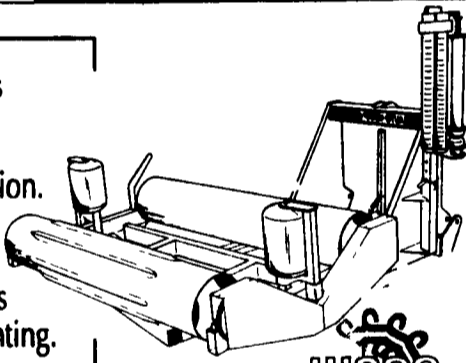
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