

Chester County Dairy Milk Lines

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The Fly Season

It's summertime. The weather is hot and muggy, and flies are a major bother to you and your cows.

And on top of that, your neighbor threatens to go to the township supervisors and get them to do something about *your* flies attacking *their* property.

Nobody likes to swat flies at the dinner table that may then fall into the iced tea or mashed potatoes, but your neighbors are even less understanding.

Poultry houses and swine operations have major problems coping with flies, but dairy farms can also present problems if certain practices are not followed.

Fly control management should be a combination of cultural, bio-

logical, and chemical practices. Some of the key points include:

Cultural Control

1. Sanitation, sanitation, and more sanitation. The life cycle of a fly requires that immature flies (eggs, larvae, pupae) live in manure, moist hay, spilled silage, wet grain, etc., for 10-21 days. Prime areas for breeding flies include animal pens (especially calf housing), poorly drained free-stalls, stall barn gutters, wet feed in mangers and bunks as well as feed and forage accumulation around silos. Gutters and mangers should be cleaned daily and pens and feed around silos should be cleaned weekly.

2. Sticky Ribbons. They can manage low or moderate fly populations as long as they are changed

every 1-2 weeks to keep them from drying out, getting coated with dust, or becoming saturated with flies.

3. Keep milk house a fly-free zone. Screen doors and windows must be installed and maintained. Traffic in and out of the milk house should be kept to a minimum. The occasional fly that does get in can be controlled with sticky tapes, light traps, or certain approved insecticides.

4. Prevent flies from immigrating from the farm to your neighbors. By spreading manure and bedding as thinly as possible in the field, it will dry down quickly and inhibit the fly cycle. Incorporating the manure in the soil also helps. Correct drainage problems around barnyards that allow manure and mud to accumulate along fence lines.

Biological Control

Flies do have natural enemies that are commonly present in dairy barns. Beetles and mites devour fly eggs and larvae, adult flies are prone to disease, and fly

pupae are attacked by parasitic wasps.

The wasp best adapted to Northeast dairy farms is *Muscidifurax raptor*. These wasps are like "smart bombs" in that they live only to find and kill fly pupae. They sting the fly pupae, killing the fly, and lay their egg inside the pupae which then hatches in three weeks to continue the cycle.

This seemingly perfect solution to fly control has a few problems that give flies a fighting chance.

First, flies develop twice as fast from egg to adult, live longer, and lay more eggs than the parasitic wasp. Consequently, in late May and early June, parasitic wasp populations are usually behind that of the fly by several weeks.

Secondly, parasitic wasps are less tolerant of insecticides. Residual sprays such as permethrin, dimethoate, and rabon are highly toxic to the wasps. Parasitic wasp populations can be conserved by using compatible insecticides

such as methomyl scatter baits and pyrethrin space sprays.

The *Muscidifurax raptor* parasitic wasp can be purchased and released weekly beginning in the middle of May at the rate of 200/cow and 1000/calf. The cost for the summer varies from \$2.60 to \$4.70 per cow, but in many cases, the farm will use 80 percent less insecticides, which more than offsets the cost.

Chemical Control

There are numerous insecticides on the market — both knock-down and residual sprays. Be careful to read the label, follow any safety precautions, and apply as directed. And, maybe they should be used as a last resort after the above-mentioned cultural and biological methods have been tried.

Good fly control not only makes life on the farm more enjoyable for you, your family, and your employees, but it can be a major ingredient in a good neighbor policy.

Chester County DHIA June 1995

Cows producing over 800 lbs. protein are:

Name	Breed	Age	Milk	Fat	Pro
Leon D. Kurtz					
Kiwi	H	4-08	25,411	1090	867
Marilyn & Duane Hershey					
Beauty	H	6-03	27,223	992	940
Bear	H	5-09	27,009	1094	912
Beaut	H	3-01	25,864	1004	861
Sassy II	H	3-02	29,114	1044	964
Swan Best Dairy					
66	H	3-11	25,338	885	801
Ardrossan Farms					
Birdeye	A	7-04	26,902	1037	933
Levi S. King					
Orpha	H	1-11	25,026	1026	827
Dunwood Farm					
Abigail	H	4-07	32,183	1172	977
Logic	H	4-08	29,406	1062	1016
Doris	H	3-01	28,805	1010	947
Crystal-Ray Farm					
Orpha	H	4-01	23,989	915	806
Ridge Star Farm					
111	H	4-07	26,595	886	849
30	H	3-06	27,766	709	892
Walmore Inc. #3					
664	H	4-00	26,517	912	847
3026	H	2-09	22,821	1036	821
Joy-Wil Farm					
38	H	8-04	27,899	1126	899
13	H	6-05	25,102	882	850
Century Oak Farm					
Jill	H	4-11	24,569	930	808
Highpoint Acres					
Minnie	H	4-00	22,852	845	801
David K. Stoltzfus					
4	H	9-02	28,554	874	884
20	H	4-02	23,886	751	808
7	H	3-05	28,467	742	923
28	H	2-02	27,234	677	822
Thunder Valley Farm					
34	H	5-04	26,928	874	879
Mark & Melody Stoltzfus					
Glenda	H	7-00	25,680	906	815
Ilika	H	5-00	27,518	827	854
Wilkinson Farm					
3014	H	4-10	25,078	842	805
3102	H	4-02	29,702	1009	896
46	H	3-06	26,235	961	825
David F. King					
87	H	7-07	27,282	803	869
Ar Joy II					
Janelle	H	3-08	26,574	672	908
Beth	H	2-11	25,619	678	831
Richard L. Myers					
325	H	4-09	25,220	868	843
Melwood Farm					
Dandy	H	5-00	27,506	984	930
Breck-A-De Farm					
124	H	3-01	24,646	979	864
Pei Valley Farm					
61	H	4-04	24,893	900	814

PAUL B.

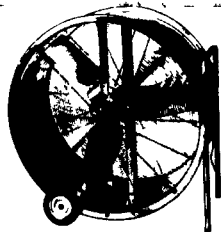
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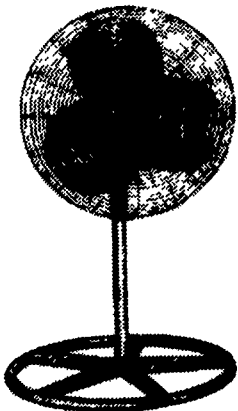
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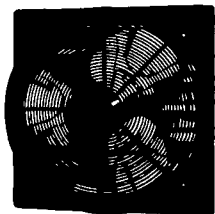
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