

Dunwalke Farm Hosts Beef Field Day

FAR HILLS, N.J.—A crowd estimated at 250 turned out for Dunwalke Farm's Beef Field Day, billed as "Beef Breeding Basics—Commercial/Seedstock/Youth," recently at the farm's headquarters.

Visitors took in some outstanding educational presentations offered as practical helps to young and adult cattlemen in their production and marketing of beef cattle. They also had the opportunity to see breeding stock from Dunwalke Farm's nationally-recognized Polled Hereford and Gelbvieh herds.

The afternoon program started with a "Youth Practicum" segment with over 40 youth participating. Dan Wunderlich, sales representative for Brown's Feeds, kicked off the youth activities with a presentation and handout about the fundamentals of balancing rations for specific beef projects and providing adequate water and sanitary conditions.

Dunwalke Farm staff member Danny Ogle gave a demonstration of grooming techniques to make slick and longer-haired beef projects look their best for exhibition.

Dr. Jon Higgins, VMD of Acorn Embryo Services, Inc. shared some reasons why health certificates are required for animal exhibitions—how to plan to have the proper test(s)/inspection completed before the event.

Les Middleton, American Polled Hereford Association field representative for the Northeast, enlisted junior volunteers for a hands-on demonstration of showing practices to help youth be more confident, courteous, and competitive.

Dunwalke Farm provided each junior with a folder of informational fact sheets for beef projects as well as a complimentary nylon show halter for attending the field day.

The adult program which followed began with marketing presentations by Dr. John Hough, vice president-education and research with the American Polled Hereford Association (APHA) and Dr. Jim Gibb, executive director of the American Gelbvieh Association (AGA). Hough discussed the new Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) program. It is an alliance between breeders, feeders, packers, and retailers to provide a consistent, leaner, highly palatable branded beef product to consumers. The program grew out of research indicating that straight and half-Hereford cattle are highly desirable for palatability when compared with other cattle slaughtered under USDA supervision. In the CHB program's first year of operation there is already a demand for an estimated 100,000 head of slaughtered cattle for the branded beef product markets.

Hough will be heading up the performance testing and sire evaluation programs of the American Hereford Association which is in the process of merging with the American Polled Hereford Association. Both memberships approved the merger in June of this year with plans to make the new consolidated association, which will keep the AHA name, operable by Sept. 1, 1995.

The two groups have joined together to provide members with more effective promotional efforts in programs such as CHB and to realize cost savings through economies of size in performing services currently duplicated by each organization. The merger will also

make it easier for members to utilize the total gene pool of registered Polled and Horned Hereford breeding stock.

Gibb discussed some innovative programs established by the AGA to add value to cattle with Gelbvieh genetics. As a newer beef breed in the U.S., and less well-known in the Northeast, he told about the breed's origins. Starting in 1850 in Germany, it was developed as a composite breed and then subjected to rigorous culling standards for maternal, calving, growth, and carcass traits. Gelbvieh semen was first imported to the U.S. in 1969 with the breed developing through a breeding-up program and additional semen/cattle importation. It has become one of the fastest-growing beef breeds in the U.S. with over 70,000 active, registered Gelbvieh cows. It is also one of only a few breeds to require performance data for registration. The breed's increase in popularity received a boost when data from the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) in 1993 indicated that Gelbvieh-sired crossbred females ranked #1 among the 24 beef breeds evaluated for pounds of calf weaned per cow exposed.

Gibb discussed AGA's Commercial Marketing Program. Special video calf sales have been established for commercial cattlemen's Gelbvieh cross calves resulting in value added because of the demand for the breed's lean growth, feed efficiency, and carcass yield qualities. AGA has also sponsored a rapidly growing number of replacement heifer sales due to the Gelbvieh-cross females' production efficiency. AGA has developed responsive networks with commercial Gelbvieh producers and feeder-buyers to help producers sell feeders directly to feedlots. In 1993, AGA, was approached by Monfort-Con Agra, Inc. to assist in developing a pricing formula for Gelbvieh-sired finished steers for its close trim retail market in order to create a dependable beef product source. In addition, AGA works closely with commercial Gelbvieh breeders on various options for retaining ownership of their calves through finishing which has resulted in increased profitability 8 out of 10 years based on AGA studies.

After the presentations by Hough and Gibb, the field day crowd was divided into three groups that rotated among three sessions for three presentations that were repeated.

Dr. Lowell Wilson, Penn State, discussed storage and utilization of round bales in beef feeding programs. Research indicates outside storage of round bales can result in dry matter loss of 5-40 percent. In the Northeast when bales are stored outside for several months forage loss is seldom below 15 percent. Wilson discussed cost-effective methods of in-barn storage, bale stacking, and outside bale covering to retain feeding value in hay. He also shared information about feeding circumstances where round bale silage and tubed silage may be utilized effectively in a balanced nutritional program. Materials on these topics are available by writing The Pennsylvania State University, Department of Dairy and Animal Science, 324 William L. Henning Building, University Park, PA 16802-3503 and requesting fact sheet #I-112—"Round Hay Bale Storage" and



APHA field representative Les Middleton discusses showmanship practices during the youth practicum segment of the Dunwalke Farm Beef Field Day.

#I-109—"Round Bale Silage."

Dunwalke Farm farm manager Howard Hoffman conducted a session on calving techniques. He used pelvic bones and a stuffed cloth calf to illustrate normal/abnormal presentations as well as a calf-puller, snare, and oxygen apparatus for use in assisting with calving problems. He stressed that bull and cow selection can significantly reduce calving difficulty. Dunwalke Farm takes pelvic measurements of its yearling heifers each year and uses these as a tool in the selection of herd replacements. He emphasized the need to also use the expertise of local veterinarians.

In his breeding session, Dunwalke Farm herdsman Nelson Gerlach shared some practices to increase conception rates, save time, and avoid breeding prob-

lems. He discussed the farm's conditioning of natural service sires which includes grass as the primary feedstuff so that bulls are gaining weight but adapted to pasture conditions before being turned in with the cow herd. Females are put in a high quality pasture three weeks before the breeding season begins and then in a new pasture when the breeding season starts to stimulate estrus. He compared the effectiveness of younger and older bulls in pasture in servicing females. He covered the usefulness of bull reproductive evaluations, semen testing, and breeding guarantees for purchased bulls. With the use of reproductive tracts from slaughtered cows, Gerlach demonstrated how semen is deposited by the bull and by A.I. in the

tract to cause fertilization. He suggested that only early-calvers should be artificially inseminated since a fertile bull remains the most effective way to breed cows for earlier calves.

The Dunwalke Farm Polled Hereford and Gelbvieh herds contain more than 400 head of purebred stock with a commercial herd maintained for the farm's embryo transfer program. The Polled Hereford herd includes a number of sires with Gold Trophy, Gold Performance, and Trait Leader status as well as several national champions of both sexes. The newer Gelbvieh herd includes several Dams of Merit as well as the 1993 and 1994 national champion female. Dunwalke Farm has been breeding registered cattle for more than 60 years.

Hinish Farm Hosts Waste Water Day

HOLLIDAYSBURG (Blair Co.) — More than 130 area farmers, agricultural dealers, and support agencies visited the Rod and Trudy Hinish farm outside Williamsburg on Clover Creek recently for the Milkhouse Waste Water Handling Field Day and Farm Tour. Rod Hinish welcomed the group to the family's 235-head dairy operation and to the field day, which was made possible through a grant from the Pennsylv-

ania Association of Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) and the Blair County Conservation District.

Lyn Garling, coordinator for PASA, introduced the various dealers which were on hand throughout the tour to display agricultural commodities.

Two presentations were made on farm waste water handling and the regulations and handling options. Zeke Brehm, operations chief for the Water Management

Program of the Department of Environmental Protection (previously DER), explained the DEP viewpoint. Current law grandfathered old underground milkhouse systems but no longer permits anaerobic treatment of milkhouse water or underground disposal. Once a system malfunctions or when a new system is installed, all waste water must be treated aerobically through surface application.

Paul Hoge from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) explained the regulations that milk inspectors follow when making farm visits. PDA follows DEP standards and Paul explained several inexpensive methods of treatment that are acceptable to both agencies.

Grassed filters and daily applications by hauling with the manure are common ways of handling the waste water aerobically. Adding the waste water to liquid manure storage is also a good way to handle the effluent.

A display provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service was also exhibited and explained by Robert Clauto, field conservationist and Harold Wareham, technician, who presented two experimental alternatives to waste water treatment via a man-made wetlands or a bark bed.

Following the presentations



Rod and Trudy Hinish hosted a recent milkhouse waste water handling field day.

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