



Lancaster Farming

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Beth Ney, an embryo flushing technician with Next Generation, looks through a dissecting microscope for fertile embryos to treat, grade, and freeze for sale overseas.

Marketing Genetics Through Flushing, Exporting Embryos

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
NEWMANSTOWN (Lebanon Co.) — While exporting dairy cattle and bred heifers is one of the major ways individual dairy farmers can enjoy exporting, others have found faster turnaround on investment and ready markets for high quality frozen embryos.

The number of dairy cattle breeders who regularly flush heifers and sell embryos has been growing, according to those involved in the business.

For Kirby and Cheryl Horst of Newmanstown, flushing and exporting frozen eggs has helped their business.

Depending on the index, markets exist for certain combinations of genetics, and virgin heifers are even being flushed, depending on index, and sold because of the potential value they hold in making faster leaps in genetic improvement.

Again, that value is speculative. There is no guarantee that a recipient cow will accept a top quality fertilized embryo, or that a specific mix of genes will actually result in a superior animal.

Therefore, the price negotiated for an embryo is much less compared to the price for a bred heifer

of equally high index (some have suggested a fifth of the price), but there's the opportunity to sell more, have more cash on hand, and the buyer has the opportunity to break into ownership of top quality genetics with less capital investment.

For the Horsts, one of their current top flushing cows was an investment made last November, when they paid \$17,000 for Juniper Mascot Rosebud, with 76-pounds of protein on index.

One of their first flushing investments was purchased as a calf and has been flushed 23 times with 50 embryos sold and about 90

percent of those being exported overseas. Kirby said he expected that she probably will wind up with 40 calves.

Purchased from a Virginia farm as a 3-month-old calf, Windcrest Leadman Jessie embryos have gone to buyers in Australia, England, France, Holland and Japan.

The Horsts said they credit her with helping to finance a barn expansion completed in January.

"She'll probably wind up with 12 bulls in artificial insemination," Kirby said recently. Jessie classified as a Very Good 89 with an excellent mammary as a 2-year-

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U. of Pa. Holds New Bolton Open House

KENNETT SQUARE (Chester Co.) — For the first time in many years, University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine held an open house at New Bolton Center, the school's rural campus for large animals.

Although Saturday, September 23, proved to be a cloudy and somewhat raw day, a record crowd of more than 6,000 showed up to tour the hospital facilities.

Receiving maps for a self-guided tour, people were treated to a firsthand look at surgery rooms, ultrasound/cardiology and radiology departments, laser surgery, pool recovery, treadmill, scintigraphy, and adult intensive care.

Barns of live animals including several breeds of dairy cows and horses, mule, llama, miniature horse, sheep, swine, pot-bellied

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Housing Expo Showcases Research Displays, Demonstrations

Penn State Strives To Get A Handle On Flies

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff
LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Fly control has always been a headache for the poultry and livestock producer. Where do producers go to stem the explosion of those pesky culprits?

At this year's Housing Expo, scheduled next Wednesday and Thursday at the Lebanon Fairgrounds, Penn State will feature displays of the latest research on fly control methods, including some intriguing research that could prove beneficial.

The fly problem "is serious, and traditional chemical controls are

not nearly as effective as they were at one time," said Leon Ressler.

Ressler, Lancaster County ag environment agent who deals with farm/urban interface issues, is helping to conduct a Penn State-sponsored study to examine ways to reduce fly populations in manure.

One study examines ways to cover manure with plastic to reduce fly populations. A poultry producer makes a 7-8 foot high manure windrow which is covered with 6-mil black plastic and covered over, completely sealed like a trench silo. In it, ammonia gas, which builds up naturally from the manure, effectively kills the fly population.

The black plastic could be used a number of times, which would make it "worth your money" said Ressler. "There's no reason, as long as the plastic isn't torn, why you couldn't reuse it."

The plastic has to be sealed "pretty well," for two weeks, said Ressler. Producers must keep the edges covered to prevent fly populations from escaping.

Pat Shea, who manages 216,000 layers for Wenger's Feed in Shartlesville, recently participated in a Penn State-sponsored fly control study on his farm. In June this year, after collecting several tons of layer manure from his houses, the manure (at a moisture level of 60

percent) was moved to a distant part of his farm, dumped in a row at the edge of a field and covered with 6-mil black plastic, measuring 100 feet by 25 feet, and sealed over with dirt.

Before covering, Penn State Extension agents inspected the manure and found many fly larvae and pupae. Some measurement of the presence of ammonia was undertaken. After two weeks, the plastic was removed, indicating little odor — and the presence of dead fly material.

Using the black plastic to cover the manure to reduce the fly popu-

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Housing Expo Schedule Covers Building Know-How, Cow Comfort

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — The 1995 Animal Housing Expo is scheduled Nov. 8-9 here at the Lebanon Fairgrounds.

"The purpose of the expo is to help farmers in the Northeast learn more about animal housing concerns," said Dan McFarland, general chair of the expo and York County extension agent.

Approximately 1,400 people

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To monitor the flies, 10 cards are used per house. One card observed by Donald Burkholder in Host recently had hardly any fly markings at all. Fly control research is one of many programs featured at the Penn State displays at next week's Livestock Housing Expo.

Lancaster Farming At Big 40!

It was 40 years ago, on Nov. 4, 1955, that the first issue of Lancaster Farming appeared in rural mailboxes. Since then, every week, Lancaster Farming has continued to supply news, advertising, and markets to more readers than ever in fact, more than 80,000 copies of Lancaster Farming are distributed each week.