

# Will Cows Eat Anything?

(Continued from Page A27)

cleaned-out feed trough. Actually, what the farmer is doing is introducing fresh feed regularly to the nose and taste buds of the cows.

Despite what textbooks say to the contrary, the farmer knows that cows do have taste buds and that catering to them is an advantage in milk production. I know a very successful dairy farmer who maintains a high-producing herd, mostly because he turns his cows into a new pasture every day. He understands the importance of catering to his cows' taste buds.

Recently, some fine ruminant research has come out of Utah State University that proves this.

Plain straw was fed first, and then spices and/or grain supplements were added.

Not only did the animals eat more straw when spices were added, but they preferred those spices, which had been paired with the grain supplement. Free choice intake was increased significantly.

The conclusion was that "traditionally palatability was defined as a combination of taste, odor and texture that is pleasing to the taste; but the new research shows that palatability depends on a biochemical link between the stomach and the taste buds, which depends on a feed's nutrient content and the animal's need for that nutrient in the feed."

Therefore, the practice of offering the same feed to our cows day after day needs rethinking. Even when we formulate the contents correctly according to composition, we don't always get maximum free choice intake.

The Utah research points out that "variety is the spice of life" even for our dairy cows.

Simply by changing the flavor of feeds, researchers found as much as a 20-percent additional feed intake.

Cows are not that dumb after all, and by paying more attention to the flavor, odor and taste of feeds, dairy farmers can boost their milk production.

**HONESDALE (Wayne Co.)** — The stress in the life of the dairy farmer can be overwhelming. The current low milk price and increased farm expenses may leave you with more expenses than the milk check will cover. This can lead to high levels of negative stress in your lives. Unwanted stress can be a friendly signal if you pay attention to it, like a warning light that flashes on the dashboard of your car. Symptoms of stress let you know there is a problem that needs correcting.

Some common signals of negative stress include: • Tension in neck, shoulder or stomach muscles • Frustration, nervousness, depression, and worry • Shallow breathing, rapid heartbeat • Fatigue, insomnia, nail biting, stomach problems • Headaches, backaches • Craving for alcohol, cigarettes or food • Cold, sweaty hands or feet • Resentment, anger, short temper.

Learning to recognize the symptoms of unwanted stress is the first step in dealing with them.

Making a conscious effort every day to try to relax — even if just a little — may result in an increased feeling of well being and a more optimistic attitude. Here are some suggestions to aid you in dealing with the symptoms:

- Take a hot bath instead of a quick shower.
- Play with and pet your dog or cat.
- Help somebody else - a neighboring farmer or an elderly shut-in.
- Accept what cannot be changed.
- Talk positively to a good friend or your spouse.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Get enough sleep.
- Try to improve your time management.
- Watch a comedy and laugh.
- Listen to music while you're working.
- Watch birds at a

bird feeder or set up an aquarium and watch the fish.

Challenges are part of our lives. How we respond to them plays a major role in determining our well being. When we handle our difficulties with humor we feel better. If we allow the pressures of life to get the best of us, we become stressed out, edgy and less sensitive to those around us. It becomes all too easy to strike out verbally or physically.

Fortunately, this cycle of stress build up can be broken. You can learn to catch the negative stress early and lessen it before it becomes destructive to your health and relationships.






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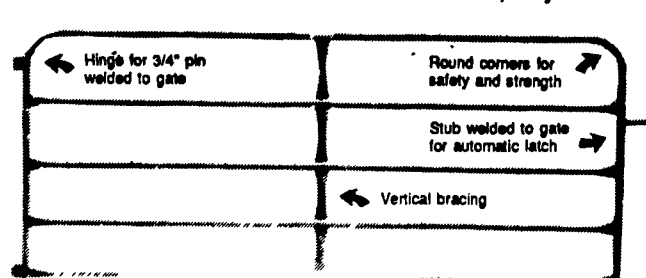
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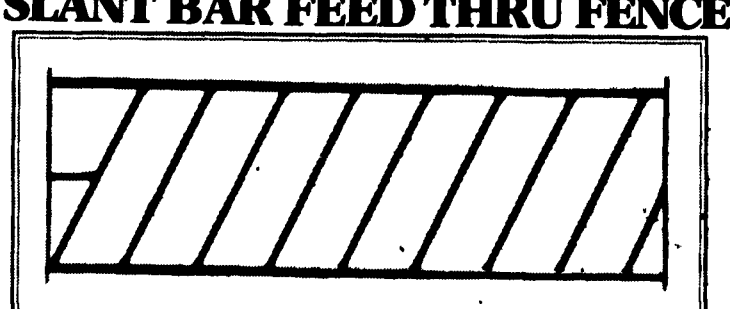
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## NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT AND REPRODUCTION HIGHLIGHT SOUTHEAST PA DAIRY DAYS

### Special Invitation to 1996 Southeast Dairy Days

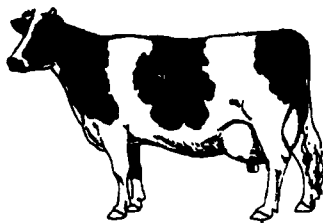
January 3 - Berks County  
Agricultural Center, north of Reading

January 4 - Chester County  
Oxford Fire Hall, Oxford

January 5 - Bucks/Montgomery Counties Family  
Heritage Restaurant, Franconia

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dr. Michael O'Connor



### Program Highlights

- Best Management Practices for a Good Nutrient Management Program  
Jerry Martin, Project Assistant, Pequea-Mill Creek Project
- Managing Reproduction in High-Producing Cows  
Dr. Michael O'Connor, Penn State Dairy Reproduction Specialist
- The PA Nutrient Management Act & How It Will Operate in the County  
County Agent and County Conservation District
- How Reproduction Principles Are Applied on the Farm  
Panel - Farmers, Vet and Dr. Michael O'Connor
- Local segment  
Berks - farmers' experiences with: tunnel ventilation; mattresses; sprinklers in tie-stall barns; and group feeding of pre-weaned calves.  
Chester - A practical grazing plan at Lindenhof Farm  
Speakers: Axel Linde and Millie Widmann
- Montgomery/Bucks - Water quality from a water utility's perspective  
Philadelphia Suburban Water Company

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For Reservations, Contact:

- Berks County - Clyde Myers (610) 378-1327
- Montgomery/Bucks County - Mike Fournier (215) 345-3283
- Chester County - Walter Wurster (610) 696-3500

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