

## Pa.DHIA Introduces Internet Services

**PAT TORETTI**

Pennsylvania DHIA is now offering Internet services to users of the Pa. DHIA ARIS system and its laboratory bulletin boards, according to Jim Boyer, Pa. DHIA's processing center manager.

"We're very excited to be able to extend this kind of service, because it really positions the ARIS system where we've always wanted it," says Boyer.

"Internet access to our mainframe allows us to present things like news, electronic mail, and file transfer services to our customers. These options save us on 1-800 long distance charges while providing significant new functionality for our customers.

"For example, an ARIS user can now receive a notification that his reports are available via e-mail, without ever having to dial the mainframe in State College.

"He can also pick an option that allows us to send reports directly to his e-mail account or Internet service provider if the provider offers that kind of feature, or, he can retrieve the reports via FTP (file transfer protocol) or the more conventional ARIS downloads.

"If the customer's Internet

account offers the option, he can even dial directly into the DHIA mainframe via telnet at speeds up to 56 KBPS, or even faster," Boyer said.

"We're looking for dairymen, vets, and consultants who want to participate in the program right now," Boyer said, "It's available to anyone interested.

"For ARIS customers who've been meaning to get online with the Internet, this is a good reason to start. The system is really a great deal easier to use over a high speed IP connection than via the traditional modem-to-mainframe vehicle. And front-ends like the Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mosaic, or Netscape Navigator make the program easier to use."

The DHIA processing center has big plans for exploiting the information super highway that has literally exploded in the past few years.

Pennsylvania will be introducing a home page on the World Wide Web with links to supporting industries like breed associations, AI studs, and farm publications, and will offer news, electronic mail, advertising and other services to industry cooperators, consultants, and members in the coming weeks.

"The real power of the Internet is in commerce," Boyer said. "And a great deal of that capability remains untapped. But combine the recent communications deregulation, the number of new vendors online every day, and enhanced privacy and security programs for financial transactions with the number of users plugged into the Internet and we are talking about some really phenomenal opportunities in the coming year," he said.

ing year," he said.

"There are millions of people already connected to this world via America Online, CompuServe, or their own local provider. And MCI and AT&T are even getting into the act."

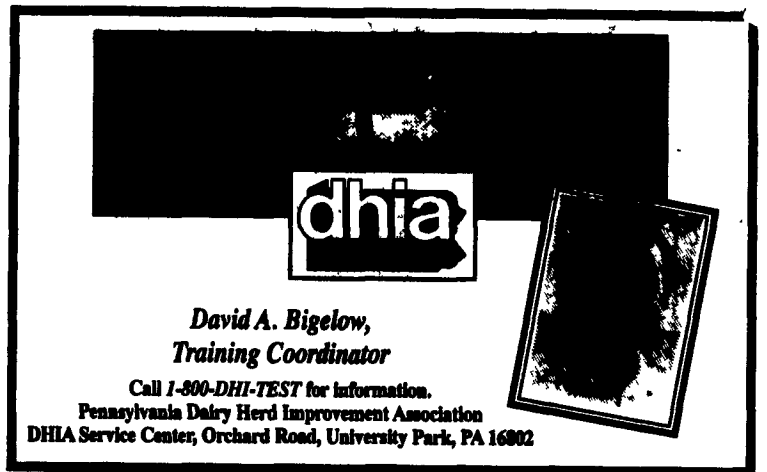
"We're just overwhelmed by the possibilities right now," said Dave Slusser, PA DHIA's general manager. "At a time when a lot of people — especially those with their own personal computers — are questioning the value of DHIA, the new services we're implementing showcase the great benefit of belonging to a cooperative association.

"For example, one service we envision offering would allow people to offer advertising to purchases who want heifers. A dairyman on our heifer program will be able to hook up with buyers literally anywhere in the world. And by providing a one stop shopping center with database capability, those buyers will be able to fill orders for the exact kinds of numbers of calves they want easily and quickly.

"That gives real value to both the purchases and the seller, and that's something you can't do with a computer all by yourself," Slusser said.

"I see us being able to connect dairymen to the right vets, feed mills, equipment dealers, and financial consultants to solve the problem of their individual farms. That kind of networking operation just won't be available to people who're isolated from DHIA."

The visual impact of the Web is expected to help Pennsylvania DHIA sell and explain new services like the Milk Urea Nitrogen testing introduced last October.



Benchmarks, graphs, and other explanatory information will be available online. And the interactive nature of the Internet will allow interested members and support people to actually walk through training and educational materials as they become available.

"For instance, we regard performance economics as being one of the most important areas for our farmers as the money situation tightens on so many farms," Slusser said.

"With the right programming

on a web page, we can actually show a farmer how to use the information on a 1040F to fill out the DHIA barnsheet to get maximum impact from our Performance Economics program."

Although the new services will not be limited to ARIS patrons, current users of PA DHIA's ARIS system who are interested in accessing ARIS via their Internet accounts can contact Dan Smith at 1-800-DHI-TEST.

Be sure to let him know your e-mail address and the particulars of your computer system when you call.

## Terraces Ease

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What matters most is "rethinking" practices that so many farmers have been accustomed to over the years. Many would plow up 20 or more acres of ground, not thinking about possible erosion problems. Now it's safer to work on 4-5 acres at a time, and keep erosion controls in place.

In 1980, the Moyers installed a concrete-bottom, earthen-side manure holding pit. Moyer expects to add a heifer manure holding pit sometime in the future. Also, Moyer has a carefully drawn up nutrient management plan for his farm, written for him by the district.

Other farms are taking heed. Moyer admitted so seeing a "lot of water being run away" on nearby farms, but "there are going to be more farmers putting terraces in."

The Moyers have participated in an ASCS cost-share program for the work of paying for the heavy earth-moving equipment and labor to create the terraces. The cost-share pays about 80 percent of the terrace installation fees. Without that money, Moyer said he "wouldn't have done it."

Work in the future will involve turning the seven acres of pasture into a rotationally grazed system.

But the terraces have proved to be a soil-saver.

"They're in there now and I know my ground will be protected," he said. "We just have to learn to farm them."

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