

# ADC, Dairy Partnership Network Use Bay Trip To Discuss Strategy

(Continued from Page A1)

from the Dairy Network Partnership, a group of people consisting of representatives from Rodale Institute, PASA, CBF, Penn State Extension, the EPA and ADC.

The group met for the first time last July and, according to Lori Sandman, with Rodale, and Les Lanyon, with Penn State Extension, an effort has been underway to create a financial reward program for dairy producers whose farming practices are environmentally sound and maintained.

The program idea is to get as close as possible to a direct consumer-producer relationship of financial reward.

The basic theory is that consumers will not only select a product of equal value over another if that product carries with it the promise of helping to protect the environment, but that the consumer will pay slightly more for it, because it has an environmental enhancement value.

Examples of existing products and product lines whose company promotions have marketed them in association with environmental stewardship were discussed.

Lanyon talked about how Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream have associated themselves with helping the survivability of the family farmer, and also, through flavor names, with environmental concern.

He also talked about people's selections of products, and apparent willingness to pay more for them, that advertise such things as being kosher foods, natural foods, etc.

Small, almost unnoticeable logos, or seals (such as the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval, Underwriter's Laboratories, USDA approved, and registered with the Pa. Dept. of Ag) have been used for years in United States to distinguish products and sway consumer choice.

One product Lanyon displayed even touted its milk as imported from Lancaster County — a tact that relies on the general public's tourism affections and Lancaster County's reputation for plain people who portray wholesomeness.

The reason for the involvement by ADC is that through a cooperative, a promotional, labeling and over-retail price program would probably have a better chance of success with the general public than with a private processor, but private enterprise isn't ruled out.

The other reason is that ADC controls a large portion of the milk in the Middle Atlantic States and that produced in the Susquehanna River drainage of the Chesapeake watershed.

The concept is defined further in the assumption that an environmentally concerned consumer would be willing to pay an incremental amount more for the milk they purchase and that extra amount would then be allocated back in direct compensation to dairy farmers who practice good stewardship.

Rating dairy producer environmental stewardship would possibly be done by the cooperative's milk inspectors in addition to other inspection actions they take and record.

A rating card has tentatively been devised that would rate the amount of best management practices used by a producer.

It is also considered that, given public support and funding, that some of the money could be used to help dairy producers, otherwise reluctant to enter into cost-share agreements with government, design and construct facilities or changes to their operations that limit the effect of the dairy on the environment.

Lanyon and others said that part of the concern is that while efforts have been underway to increase environmental stewardship through cost-sharing for manure storage, stream fencing, cattle crossings and other practices, that doing so does not necessarily increase the profitability of the farm.

Further, there are many small streams running through farms that are contributors of sediment, perhaps the biggest threat to the entire river and bay system. Sediment smothers aquatic life, including oysters, but even closer to home, it destroys the ability of small waterways to sustain beneficial aquatic life, such as sport and edible fishes.

Those whose farming operations depend on rented farmland also have no inherent incentive to install protective measures, and landowners leasing farmland are provided no market incentive for doing so.

A survey was reportedly mailed recently to ADC farmers requesting their thoughts on what was important and what additional information they wanted to know.



Blake Glaeser, captain of the Stanley Norman, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's educational vessel, sits on a boat hatch cover and, using detailed map talks about the bay and its character which makes it unique among the Earth's estuaries.



Education via a short cruise in the Chesapeake Bay on the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's skipjack sailboat is a hands-on experience. Here fingers touch the leathery shell of a small blue crab in recent post-molt — also called the soft-shell stage.

Included was a list of references.

While there is an effort to continue farm-based education and farmer-to-farmer efforts, and an effort to evaluate current cost-share programs, surveys are also

(Turn to Page A36)



On the left, longtime Chesapeake Bay waterman Earl White stands next to a dredge and tells of his experiences of years of collecting oysters in the bay. He blames human greed for destroying most of the oyster beds in the bay, along with pollution from adjoining cities and large urban sprawl along tributary waterways.



From the left, Les Lanyon and Chesapeake Bay Foundation educator Stewart Harris empty the catch from one of the two small hand dredges used on the Stanley Norman.