

# Arlene Wilbur Joins Dairy Promotion Efforts

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 — Many view Jan Harding and Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Promotion Services (PDPPS) as synonymous. But a new name is fast becoming associated with PDPPS — Arlene Wilbur. The Bradford County woman recently was appointed assistant director to Harding.

"Arlene is a very capable person and is a tremendous asset to PDPPS," Harding said. "Through her experience in having her daughter serve as dairy princess and through her involvement on the Bradford County Dairy Promotion committee, she really has a lot to offer the program."

Arlene grew up in the small town near Bradford. After she graduated from high school and business school, Arlene married dairy farmer Arlyn Wilbur. He continued to farm the 110-acre family farm that had been in the family for almost a century.

While raising daughter Robin, who became the 1991-1992 Pennsylvania Dairy Princess, and a son Jeffrey, who is now a high school senior, Arlene worked 10 years as assistant vice president of a branch bank and later as a bookkeeper for a construction company.

"When Robin was crowned

dairy princess, I believed in the dairy princess promotion and program so much that I quit my job to accompany Robin," Arlene said.

The introduction to the many agricultural groups who work together for dairy promotion impressed Arlene. Formerly she was acquainted with promotion at only the local level.

After Robin's reign ended and she went on to college, Arlene went back to work as a bookkeeper. Later Robin married a dairy farmer from Tioga County and now works as an administrative assistant at Cornell University. But Arlene never stopped her involvement in dairy promotion. She became chairperson for Bradford County Dairy Promotion and enjoyed accompanying dairy princesses and alternates to training and promotional programs. When serving as a judge for the New York Dairy Princess Program, Arlene was overheard saying, "I have a job, but this is what I really love."

When Jan heard her comment, she suggested she apply for the position with PDPPS. After interviews with board members, Arlene was officially hired in June.

"Over the past 10 to 12 years, the dairy princess program has grown tremendously to include dairy maids and ambassadors," Jan said.

This means more bookwork and meetings for Jan, who has run the program with only the help of a typist.

"It's been a rat race," Jan said. "The board of directors and county committee members help a lot, but they are too busy to do all that needs to be done."

Because Arlene was acquainted with so many different aspects of PDPPS — mother of a dairy princess, county coordinator, and farm wife — she already has a working knowledge of what needs to be done and how the program can be improved.

"People don't realize what goes into making milk — how much farmers care about their product. There are a lot of misconceptions about dairy products," Arlene said.

When Arlene talks, she speaks with confidence and contagious enthusiasm for the industry and the program. "Milk is nearly a perfect food. You won't get natural nutrition with any other alternatives."

She's concerned that surveys show that many doctors and dieticians haven't kept up with recent research.

"One of our former dairy princesses entered nursing school and the dietician who taught a course did not even know the proper daily allowances for dairy products," Arlene said.

The former dairy princess used her training and the resources from the Dairy Council to acquaint the nursing school professionals with up-to-date information.

That's why Arlene believes the dairy princess program is so valuable.

"We need people in the professional field. What dairy princesses are taught stays with them. They believe in dairy products. That's one more point for farmers."

"These girls are taught about the many different dairy products available and how even those with restricted diets can use dairy products to meet the need for calcium," she said.

Television and radio advertisements can only do so much, Arlene believes.

"Television advertising doesn't explain the health standards of farmers," she said. Of PDPPS, Arlene said, "We do a lot with promotional dollars. We are the grassroots promotion. Consumers see dairy princesses face to face. The girls are armed with the best resources to give consumers informed answers."

She's alarmed that so many farmers are under the impression that dairy princesses just ride in parades or hand out samples in grocery stores.

"Of course, dairy princesses are taught to dress professionally, to look nice because it makes a statement, but people often don't see the involvement or the education these girls receive. They are making a difference."



As a dairy farm wife, mother of a former state dairy princess, school board director, involvement in county dairy promotion, and more, Arlene Wilbur brings a wealth of experience to PDPPS.

While Arlene is pleased with the presentations dairy princesses do at the elementary school level — they made 1,369 appearances so far this year, she said its only an introduction.

"We plant seeds in elementary school, but we need to follow through. We need dairy princesses going into human resource classes at the high school level. This age group is often going to the store for their busy parents. The high schoolers should know about looking for the Real seal and be taught about natural healthy nutrition from someone their own age group."

As dairy princess coordinator in Bradford County, Arlene has required local dairy princesses to go into the high school and tell their peers about the importance of using real dairy products.

As a school board director for 10 years, Arlene knows that schools that use government money to meet educational standards welcome those from the community to help in education.

"Teachers are sometimes skeptical, but when they see the information we have, they are thrilled to have dairy princesses visit," Arlene said.

"It makes good sense that milk

is the most natural perfect food. It's the base for the best products," she said.

Arlene is excited to play a role in dairy promotion. She said, "Dairy farming plays a big part in Pennsylvania economy. The trickle-down effect overflows into other businesses as well. We are doing a lot for dairy and ag-related businesses."

Arlene will handle the financial records for PDPPS from her home computer where she is setting up an office in LaRaysville. From that office, she will also correspond with dairy princesses and coordinators.

While Arlene is in training to take over Jan's responsibilities after she retires, that doesn't mean Jan's retirement is imminent.

"We aren't going to let Jan retire completely," said Charlene Ranck, coordinator for PDPPS southeast district. "We are fortunate to have both Arlene and Jan working together."

PDPPS is supported and funded by Pennsylvania dairy farmers through American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc., Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association, American Dairy Association, Mid-East Allied Milk Producers and independent contributors.



As assistant director, Arlene Wilbur, right, will assist Jan Harding, left, in directing Pennsylvania Dairy Princess and Promotion Services, Inc. In its 40 year history, PDPPS has grown tremendously in its promotional services for the dairy industry.



## OMESTEAD NOTES

