

## Banquet Will Honor Local Conservationists

DAUPHIN (Dauphin Co.) — Individuals, families, and organizations are cordially invited to attend the Dauphin County Conservation District's Annual Awards Banquet on Tuesday, March 11.

The district will honor persons and/or groups for their outstanding contributions to the conserva-

tion of our natural resources. This special event will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Dauphin County Agriculture and Natural Resources Center.

The evening will begin with a buffet dinner. Following the meal, an awards ceremony will recognize such individuals as 1996 Outstanding Conservation Educator and 1996 Outstanding Conserva-

tion Farmer. A presentation featuring the making of Pennsylvania's renowned wildlife videos will conclude the evening.

Hal Korber, a video specialist with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, is well known for his video compositions, especially the production of the commission's award-winning bear video. Through a video excursion, Hal

will give audience members a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the popular "On the Trail of Pennsylvania's Black Bears" video, "Pennsylvania Whitetails Living with Change" video and give us a sneak preview of the upcoming Pennsylvania Elk Video.

Tickets for the banquet are available from the Dauphin Coun-

ty Conservation District. The cost of the tickets are \$12 for adults, \$6 for children ages 3-8 years old, and free for children under 3 years old. Ticket deadline is March 4. All money is due by this date and any cancellations after March 4 will not be refunded.

For more information about the banquet, call (717) 921-8100.

## March Conference Focuses On New, Traditional Equine Therapies

BETHLEHEM (Northampton Co.) — Would you like to know more about respiratory problems such as heaves, chronic coughs and allergies that limit the performance of your horse?

Do you know how large a threat Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis is to your horse and how to recognize the early symptoms of the disease?

Have you wondered if all the advertised supplements really work for the arthritic or heavily stressed performance horse?

Would you like to know more about the realities of alternative therapies?

Could acupuncture and chiropractics benefit your horse?

If you own, ride, or train horses, and would like to know the answers to these questions and others, be sure to attend the very exciting conference, New and Traditional Equine Therapies, which is being held on March 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, Bethlehem. The conference, which is sponsored by cooperative extension of Penn State and Rutgers universities, will provide very valuable information on the treatment of a variety of unsoundnesses that can inhibit equine performance.

Six well-noted veterinarians will present information on chronic coughs and allergies, alternative therapies, acupuncture, chiropractics, treating common joint, muscle and tendon injuries, and recognizing and treating Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis (EPM).

For more information and a registration form, contact Donna Foulk at the Monroe County Extension Office, (717) 421-6430; Everett Chamberlain at the Warren County Extension Office, (980) 475-6503; or Nancy Kadwill at the Montgomery County Extension Office, (610) 489-4315.

## Conservation Leadership School Offers Unique Opportunities

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Instead of desks and blackboards, the classrooms at Penn State's Conservation Leadership School this summer will include an underground cave, canoes, and sailboats on a 72-acre lake and green leaves and shade on 700 acres of forested land.

In this unique setting at the University's Stone Valley Recreation Area near State College, Pa., secondary students between the ages of 15 and 18 will learn about conservation during two-week programs that emphasize field-based, hands-on learning, group problem solving and environmental man-

agement planning.

The curriculum involves active participation in environmental management, resource assessment, and regenerative conservation methods. Topics include watershed management, citizen action, basic ecology, land-use planning, alternative energy supplies, environmental risk assessment and forest management.

Students provide their own transportation to the Stone Valley Recreation Area, where they will stay in four-person platform tents with cots, heated shower and restroom facilities, complete meal service and all educational needs.

The \$440 tuition (\$495 for non-Pennsylvania residents) covers tuition and all other costs for the student's two-week stay.

The 1997 Conservation Leadership School dates are: Session I, June 29-July 12; Session II, July 13-26; and Advanced Session, August 13-26. Please note: The Advanced Session is open only to students who previously attended a regular session.

To register by phone or for more information, call 1-800-PSU-TODAY (1-800-778-8632), or visit <http://www.cde.psu.edu/C&I/ConservationLS.html> to see the WWW page.

## Agriculture Needs Good Highways

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — Agriculture is successful in Pennsylvania because of "our great interstate system," according to Guy F. Donaldson, president of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB). The farm spokesman made the comments recently at the Radisson Penn Harris Hotel at a Pennsylvania Highway Information Association (PHIA) meeting.

"During the past 40 years," Donaldson said, "our great inter-

state system has enabled Pennsylvania farmers to turn their small family farms into successful agribusinesses by allowing them to reach markets outside their own communities."

He stressed this point by saying farmers have access to nearly 40 percent of the nation's population because of the good highway system in the Keystone State.

"Farmers need good roads to produce and sell products," he said. "Without a healthy interstate system, farmers incur substantial

costs in production items, and substantial losses in selling their produce."

Donaldson said that "roads and bridges must be in good repair, if agriculture is to be successful. A modern highway system is critical to our state's well-being."

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is a voluntary farm organization which represents the voice of 26,625 families in 54 county Farm Bureaus. It is affiliated with the 4.7-million-member American Farm Bureau Federation.

## Ag Engineering Conference March 10

a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Topics will include manure storage and handling, sand bedding, deregulation of electric generation, feeding system design, and heat stress. Speakers include Richard Stowell, Food Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Ohio State University; Robert Graves and Dennis Buffington, Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Penn State University;

and John Tyson, Agricultural Engineering, Erie County Cooperative Extension.

Cost of the conference is \$10 for lunch and registrations must be received by Thursday, March 6. For additional information or registration information, contact John Tyson at the Erie County Cooperative Extension Office at (814) 825-0900.

## National Farmers Union Applauds Responsiveness To Dairy Producers

DENVER, Colo. — National Farmers Union (NFU) applauds Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman's announcement Tuesday of a four-point plan aimed at bolstering milk prices as "a good start," but stated that it is crucial that additional steps be taken administratively and legislatively to address the dramatic decline in milk prices at the bulk tank. Producer prices for milk have dropped nearly \$4 per hundred-weight over the past four months. "All of the actions announced by the secretary were presented to him by Farmers Union leaders just prior to the holidays," said NFU President Leland Swenson. "NFU is very pleased with USDA's responsiveness and recognition of the economic crisis facing independent producers across the country."

NFU will continue to push for further administrative and legislative measures to enhance and stabilize milk prices over the long term. "Farmers Union will continue to push the Clinton administration to issue an executive order establishing oversight of the National Cheese Exchange (NCE) by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) or the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and to include a federal rule prohibiting 'trading against inter-

est' within NCE activities," said Swenson.

NFU will continue to request that USDA eliminate or substantially reduce the influence of the NCE in the establishment of the basic formula price.

"In addition, it is important that Congress be requested to urge the secretary to establish a minimum floor under the basic formula price," said Swenson. "Stabilization of milk prices is good for producers and consumers alike. Although falling milk prices seem to indicate otherwise, we are not in a surplus position of milk or dairy products. Government stocks of butter or cheese are non-existent."

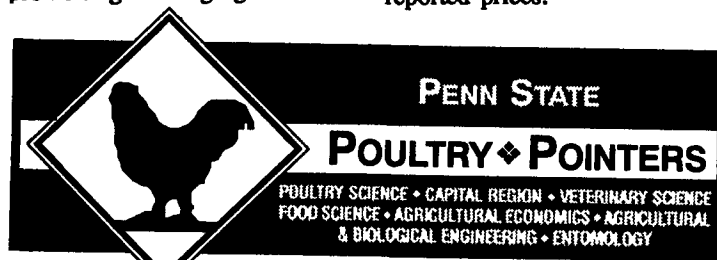
Secretary Glickman pledged to:

- Purchase \$5 million worth of cheese for domestic feeding programs, along with accelerating school lunch purchases already under way.

- Increase the level of dairy products in international food assistance programs.

- Reactivate the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) for butterfat and increase DEIP sales for non-fat dry milk.

- Begin collecting price data for cheddar cheese sales at manufacturing plants as a way of addressing concerns about the accuracy of reported prices.



### "NEW" CAUSE OF DIARRHEA/WET PITS IN PENNSYLVANIA COMMERCIAL LAYER FLOCKS

Dr. Patty Dunn  
Dept. of Vet. Science

Several commercial egg layer submissions involving complaints of wet pits, wet droppings (diarrhea), and/or increased eggshell staining have been presented to avian veterinarians at the Penn State University Animal Diagnostic Laboratory during the last two years.

Most of these cases do not involve significant loss of egg production, sickness or mortality, but do result in hardships related to pit management, manure handling and downgraded stained eggs.

Heavy fly infestations and heavy bacterial contamination (*E. coli*, *Salmonella* sp.) are also more likely in wet environments. Investigations of these cases are complex because a variety of different factors can be involved in creating these "symptoms." Some of these

factors are disease related, and some are not. Factors to be considered include the operation of the pit, types and arrangements of cages and waterers, ration, genetic strain of bird and past or current urinary tract or gastrointestinal tract disease.

To sort out which factors are most likely involved, it should first be determined if a true "diarrhea" or "diuresis" condition exists (that is, droppings are abnormally wet as they are excreted from the bird), or if the fresh droppings are normal in consistency, but take on environmental water in the dropping guard or pit areas. Birds should be observed in the process of defecation, and fresh droppings on drop curtains or boards should be examined. If the fresh droppings are indeed "runny," it may be possible to determine if the urate portion or the fecal portion contributes more to the moist consistency. Clear, watery high volume urates (diuresis) would most likely be linked to a kidney problem or excessive water intake, while soupy discolor-

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