

Maryland Dairy Industry Organized Voice

KAREN BUTLER

Maryland Correspondent

FREDERICK, Md. — The inaugural meeting of the Maryland Dairy Industry Association drew a crowd of almost 200 dairy farmers and industry representatives to the Holiday Inn FSK here. The day's agenda included a business meeting with election of officers, a lineup of speakers, and a panel discussion. After an evening banquet there was a talk by an inspirational speaker. Exhibits were displayed in the conference room.

MDIA was formed on year ago to provide an organized voice for the Maryland dairy industry. The group's mission is to enhance state dairy farmers' livelihood so the dairy industry is a viable part of the Maryland economy.

From 1980 to 1995 the number of Maryland dairy farms with milk permits dropped from about 1800 to about 875, according to the industry association. Total annual milk production declined from 1.52 to 1.34 billion pounds during that same time period. MDIA seeks to stabilize the industry and assist in retaining the infrastructure that serves it by promoting profitability for dairy producers through legislative channels with a unified voice, and by providing a forum for the interchange of ideas and technology.

The business meeting was held in the morning and directors were elected and officers appointed. New directors were elected as follows: District I, Garrett and Allegany Counties; Ed Crossland; District II, Washington County; Boyd Cook, Will Godwin, and Janet Stiles; District III, Frederick County; Wayne Burdette, Denny Crum, Nola "Cookie" Ramsburg, and Harold Lenhart; District IV, Carroll County; Sue Myers, Myron Wilhide; District V, Baltimore, Harford, Cecil, Howard, and Montgomery Counties; William Kilby, Darryl Walker; District VI, Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland; Jeff Moore.

Myron Wilhide, who served as interim president for the association during the past year, was elected president. Other officers will be Harold Lenhart, vice-president; Nola "Cookie" Ramsburg, secretary; and Will Godwin, treasurer.

This year MDIA will focus its energy on a legislative effort supporting the Southern Dairy Compact, said Myron Wilhide. Pat McMillan, assistant to the secretary at the Maryland Department of Agriculture and Legislative Liaison for the MDA, suggested the compact was, "another policy option for Maryland dairyman to consider." Joining the Northeast Dairy Compact is not currently an option for Maryland, according to McMillan, because "Pennsylvania and New York elected not to join, essentially closing the door for Maryland". (In order to join the compact a state must be contiguous to a member state).

The Southern compact would create an interstate pricing system for the region stretching from Texas to Maryland. The Ag Commission would have the authority to set class I milk prices in the area. McMillan stressed it is very difficult for a single state on its own to have an effective program. By joining with other states, the advantage would be that the compact could regulate milk that comes into the area, said McMillan.

"East state must pass legislation to join the compact, and then must go to congress to pass that compact. Congressional approval is needed because the compact would supersede interstate commerce," explained McMillan. He stressed there were no provisions in the compact to regulate retail or wholesale milk prices. He also pointed out that the compact would work within the existing Federal framework, saying the compact builds on the Federal milk marketing order system, it doesn't replace it.

Dr. John Adams, director of milk safety and animal health for the National Milk Producers Federation in Arlington, Virginia gave an overview of the national outlook and legislative and regulatory update for the industry.

Doctor Adams informed the group that Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman announced on Monday the Department of Agriculture will attempt to stay and appeal the November 3 ruling by U.S. district judge David Doty of Minneapolis that enjoins the secretary from enforcing existing class I differentials in cer-

tain Federal milk marketing order areas. If a stay is granted, USDA could continue to enforce class I differential in all Federal milk orders during the appeals process.

Adams said, "We are in transition from a period where we had increased government control to a period where we have less. We are rapidly moving toward a globalized market." He said that retaining the order system, with the USDA pursuing the milk marketing order reforms from the '96 Farm Bill are a part of the solution to the current dairy situation.

Other facets of the solution he proposed included cutting costs and liabilities and enhancing quality and consistency on the farm, expanding exports by cutting world subsidies, aggressively pursuing the World Trade Organization complaint against Canada, and utilizing the DEIP, and being prepared for emergencies. He said a greater amount of trade equals a greater risk in importing animals, and also in exporting them. This would increase the likelihood of an animal health or disease emergency. He advocated supporting development of a National Animal Health Emergency plan to deal with some of the potential scenarios. "The USDA is



Newly elected MDIA directors are, seated from the left, Boyd Cook, District II; Sue Myers, District IV; Janet Stiles, District II; Nola 'Cookie' Ramsburg, District III; and Myron Wilhide, District IV. Standing, from the left, are Denny Crum, District III; Bill Kilby, District V; Wayne Burdette, District III; Will Godwin, District II; Harold Lenhart, District III; and Darryl Walker, District V. Not included in the photograph are directors Ed Crossland, District I, and Jeff Moore, District VI.

regionalizing the world under GATT for risk so we're not looking at the world country by country, but by the ability to export on a region by region basis," he said.

Dr. Brian Perkins from Dairy Management Services, Inc. in Vermont talked to the group on building design and remodeling. "I spend 90-95% of my consult-

ing time on farms dealing with cow comfort," he said. "On 99 out of 100 farms, nutrition isn't the answer; cow comfort, cow environment, and cow handling are what really makes the milk," he stressed.

Dr. Bill Prolop, DVM from Attica Veterinary Associates in New York talked on working in a team attitude. He said herd

expansion should be preceded by profitability, not be used as a means of achieving profitability. He said expansion should involve an "advisory team of players" with specialties in differing aspects of farming. "By working together, the strength of the group is amplified," according to Dr. Prokop.

FULLTIME™ HAS TOP HERD WORKING OVERTIME.

Five years ago, Jacob Tanis believed "corn silage is corn silage," recalls Russ Judy, his Young's nutritionist. Then Tanis of Centre Hall, PA, tried Cargill FQ silage hybrids and increased milk production by 6,000 pounds per cow over a four-year period. Now he's taken another step to higher-quality feed with FullTime™ forage from Cargill.

Thanks to feeding high-quality silage and other good management practices, the Tanis herd last year was the state's top milk-producing herd, with a herd average of 31,393 pounds, according to DHIA data and was rated the highest for type in its size range by the Pennsylvania Holstein Association.

When Judy suggested that Tanis try new Cargill FullTime forage, he was receptive. He was sold on Cargill hybrids and he trusted Judy's judgment.

Tanis gives Judy a lot of credit for his success with FullTime forage. "Russ does a good job of helping me feed my herd," Tanis says.

His confidence proved well-founded in 1996. Tanis saw a milk production increase of 6 pounds per cow per day with 96 cows on test with FullTime forage. There also was a noticeable improvement in the body condition



FullTime™ clocks 7.2-lb. increase in MSU study.

The big difference between FullTime™ forage and conventional corn hybrids is their relative level of digestible fiber. Digestible fiber is a primary factor influencing milk production. FullTime forage contains nearly 40 percent less indigestible lignin. Cows fed diets containing this new forage product consumed more dry matter and produced more milk. In two university studies, cows fed FullTime forage consumed up to 8 percent more dry matter and produced up to 7.2 more pounds of milk per day. And body condition scores were maintained or improved.

of the cows, Tanis says.

Tanis planted 10 acres of FullTime forage in 1996, 20 acres in 1997 and intends to plant 30 to 35 acres next year.

This year, FullTime forage yielded as well as — or better than — other silage corn despite extremely dry weather, Tanis says. He estimates production at 15 to 20 tons per acre.

"FullTime forage can give top returns with best management practices, and obviously Mr. Tanis gave it close attention," comments Dan Froehlich, Cargill agronomic services manager.

Dr. Froehlich recommends that dairymen plant FullTime forage after soils have thoroughly warmed up. "You should expect late-season growth spurts with FullTime, so be sure there's plenty of nitrogen available, perhaps by side-dressing. And be sure to plan harvesting based strictly on percent moisture content — 66 to 70 percent for bunker silos," he advises.

"I'm extremely pleased with FullTime forage. I've never fed silage that I could get as much milk out of," Tanis says. "I would recommend it to any producer who wants to produce milk cost-effectively."

Maybe it's time you took a closer look. Cows that consumed FullTime forage in a high-forage diet produced as much as or more fat-corrected milk than cows on normal corn silage in a high-grain diet, says Ed Nimitz, Cargill forage product manager. "We believe dairymen like Jake Tanis will demonstrate to the industry that FullTime can increase your income per acre by increasing the amount of milk you get per pound of feed. FullTime forage, when properly managed, has the potential for a 5 to 1 return on investment. Even a one-pound increase in milk production will cover the increased investment for FullTime forage," Nimitz says.



Jacob Tanis, left, used to believe silage was just silage according to Russ Judy, right, Young's nutritionist.