

# Lehigh 4-H Members Recognized For Achievement

ALLENTOWN (Lehigh Co.) — Six Lehigh County 4-H members were named as outstanding members for their achievements during 1997 at a recent recognition dinner. Nearly two dozen other 4-H members were honored for outstanding work in a specific project area or for their teen leadership efforts.

David Harwick, Kempton, and Renee Ruhe, new Tripoli, were awarded plaques as outstanding 4-H boy and girl in the 8-10 year-old category. David is a member of the Dairy and Lowhill Laurel clubs. Renee is a member of the Neffs Cloverettes and the Lilliput Corner clubs.

Nathan Wagner, Coplay, and Katie Harwick, Kempton, were named outstanding 4-H boy and girl in the 11-14 year-old category. Nathan is a member of the Laurys Station and Seeing Eye Puppy clubs. Katie is a member of the Dairy and Lowhill Laurel clubs and participated in dairy judging at State 4-H Achievement Days this past summer.

Tiffany Smith, Kempton, and Kiera McAllister, South Whitehall Township, won the outstanding awards in the 15-19 year-old category. Tiffany is a member of the Neffs Cloverettes and Tenn Council. She has been active in the International 4-H Youth Exchange program, both as a host and as a visitor. Kiera is a member of the Trexlertown Merry Stitchers and Teen Council. Both girls are 4-H Ambassadors for Lehigh County this year. Kiera has also been

selected to help train 4-H Ambassadors on the state level for next year. Ambassadors are available to talk to community groups about 4-H and how it has changed in Lehigh County.

Outstanding club officers were recognized: Amy Lichtenwalner of Coplay, president; Katie Harwick, secretary; Tim Rabenold of Upper Macungie Township, treasurer; and Kristin Smith of Kempton, news reporter.

The Neffs Cloverettes 4-H Club won \$25 for the best club scrapbook. They also won the Outstanding Community Club Award. The County Cabbies 4-H Club won the Outstanding Special Interest Club Award.

The following won project medals recognizing excellence in specific project work; Jill Wagner, Coplay, overall achievement and clothing and textiles; Tiffany Smith, overall achievement, citizenship, and gardening/horticulture; Samantha Gressley, Fogelsville, agriculture; Adam Rabenold, Upper Macungie Township, beef; Kiera McAllister, citizenship and leadership; Julie Lichtenwalner, Coplay, clothing and textiles, fashion revue, and leadership; Jennifer Harris, Germansville, dairy; Elizabeth Eddinger, South Whitehall Township, food and nutrition; Suzanne Harwick, Kempton, food and nutrition; Cynthia Jacoby, New Tripoli, photography; Robyn Wirth, Orefield, poultry; Leah Crouthamel, Zionsville, rabbits and veterinary science; Chad

Flyte, Kutztown, Seeing Eye Puppy; Jessica Lichtenwalner, Emmaus, Seeing Eye Puppy; John Reinert, Orefield, sheep; John Strawbridge, Whitehall, swinge; Beth Pinto, Breinigsville, veterinary science; and Nathan Wagner, Coplay, wood science.

Adult volunteer leader were also recognized for their years of service. Completing one year of service were Eugenia Emert and Gail Heintzelman of the Neffs Cloverettes; Linda Haas, Laurys Station 4-H Club; Connie Guimaraes, Carol Moyer and Bonnie Wachter, 8th Ward Tropical Jungle 4-H Club; Debbie Jury and Jane Nattress, Lehigh County 4-H Equine Club; Gail Post, Lowhill Laurels; and Jody and Mike Rennie, Macungie 4-H Club. After a one-year apprenticeship, the Rennies have now started a new club in Coopersburg.

Honored for five years of service were Jane Bauer and Michelle Terifay, Seeing Eye Puppy 4-H Club; Richard Gressley, Sheep 4-H Club; Peggy Hemnitz, Macungie 4-H Club; Ann Mittura, Trexlertown Merry Stitchers; and Marie Weber, Veterinary Science 4-H Club.

It was announced that Naomi Lauchnor, Slatinton, was given the Someone Special Volunteer Award for 42 years of leadership in the Germansville 4-H Club. Her daughter Cynthia Newhard, also of Slatinton, was honored for 18 years of service in the same club. Bill and



Six Outstanding Lehigh County 4-H Members. Back, from left, Nathan Wagner, Coplay, and Katie Harwick and David Harwick, Kempton. Front, Tiffany Smith, Kempton; Renee Ruhe, new Tripoli; and Kiera McAllister, Allentown.

Imogene Dietrich, Germansville, were also honored as Someone Special Volunteers for more than 10 years as leader of the 4-H Dairy Club. The Someone Special Volunteer award is jointly sponsored by Gebhardt Trophies and Radio Station WAEB.

Teen leaders honored were Harvey Emert, IV, Catasauqua; Erin Lichtenwalner, Julie Lichtenwalner, and Jill Wagner, Coplay; Kristin Smith, Tiffany Smith, and Katie Harwick, Kempton; Josh Wagner, Jeff Wagner, and Amy Lenhart, New Tripoli; Stacey Dietrich and Jennifer Harris, Germansville; Terri Heintzelman, Schnecksville; Samantha Gressley, Fogelsville; Kari

Baker, South Whitehall Township; and Laura Segan, Upper Macungie Township.

During the annual meeting of the 4-H Development Fund of Lehigh County, held at the same time, Jeff Segan of Upper Macungie Township was re-elected to serve a second term on the board. Bob Soha of Allentown was elected to his first full-term on the board. He had previously filled someone else's unexpired term. The board of the 4-H Development Fund of Lehigh County oversees the distribution of money received from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and various foundations to run the 4-H program in Lehigh County.

## Dairyalea Testifies To Increase Farm Milk Price

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Dairyalea Cooperative Inc., the largest milk marketing organization based in the Northeast, has testified at several hearings throughout the region in support of efforts to increase milk prices to dairy farmers.

Most recently, Dairyalea Director of Planning and Regulatory Policy Ed Gallagher appeared at a hearing in New Jersey to consider increasing the price paid to farmers for Class I milk.

"Dairyalea commends and supports efforts to increase milk prices to farmers in New Jersey," said Gallagher. "With the recent Minnesota Milk Producers lawsuit decision that enjoins the Secretary of Agriculture from utilizing the current Class I differentials in most Federal Milk Marketing Orders — including those in the Northeast — efforts to stabilize and increase farm milk prices take on a much more significant importance."

Gallagher commented that Dairyalea specifically supports the implementation of a \$1.20 Class I over-order premium for milk produced in New Jersey and delivered to New Jersey Class I processing plants — as long as it is done in a manner that prevents Class I processors from subverting the pricing measure, and it results in a "real" increase in premiums to producers.

During his testimony, Gallagher outlined other strategies to raise New Jersey farm milk prices, including developing a tri-state plan — among the states of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylva-

nia — that will implement policy that raises returns to dairy farmers in the region and that can be implemented relatively quickly. At the same time, Gallagher called on lawmakers to pass legislation that would allow New Jersey to join the Northeast Dairy Compact as exists in the New England states.

In light of the recent Court decision that would eliminate Class I differentials, Gallagher also strongly urged the State of New Jersey to intervene and file an appeal in the Minnesota Case, if possible, and if not possible, to file an amicus brief asking the Court to stay the decision.

"The dairy farmers of New Jersey are under severe financial and emotional stress," explained Gallagher. "Plain and simple, market forces on a national level — which have the greatest influence in determining farm milk prices — have led to a severe decline in revenues for dairy farmers. With little change in feed prices and rises in other input costs, dairy farmers are facing a crippling cost/price squeeze. Despite their best efforts at cost containment on their farms, dairy producers are left short and frustrated when prices fall because supply and demand relationships — which are well beyond the control of dairy farmers — go against them."

Gallagher noted that the milk price crash of the past year has been well documented. "Prices are expected to end the year about 11 percent lower than a year ago," he reported. "This includes year-over-year price declines this past summer of as much as 22.5 per-

cent."

As a means of clarifying the cost price squeeze that farmers are experiencing, Gallagher reviewed analysis of milk-feed price ratios from a U.S. Department of Agriculture document, titled Agricultural Price Summary, which was compiled by the National Agricultural Statistical Service.

"For October 1997, the milk-feed price ratio was 2.46. This means that, with the value of one pound of milk, a dairy farmer could purchase 2.46 pounds of 16 percent mixed dairy feed," he explained. "This measure takes into account the value of milk and the cost of dairy feed and puts them on relative terms."

According to the document, the 1997 national milk feed ratios have been at the lowest levels since before 1986, for almost every month. "These ratios are even below those that existed in 1991 — the lowest milk price year of this decade," stressed Gallagher. Interpretation of this data indicates that although feed prices have fallen, milk prices have declined much more severely and have placed U.S. dairy farmers in the tightest cost/price squeeze they have experienced in many years.

As much as low prices are a problem for farmers, so is price volatility, added Gallagher. The Basic Formula Price (BFP), which affects approximately 80 to 90 percent of the Northeast's milk price, has experienced unprecedented volatility.

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## New Jersey Ready For EQIP

HACKETTSTOWN, N.J. — The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has announced the second sign-up of the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) through Jan. 16, 1998.

Established in the 1996 Farm Bill, EQIP provides a voluntary program for farmers to conserve water, soil, and related natural resources.

Nationally, EQIP provides technical, financial, and educational assistance to install or implement structural, vegetative, and management practices within a five-to-10 year contract period.

Here in New Jersey, local farms will fall into either the Statewide Program Area or the Upper Delaware/Raritan Watershed Priority Area.

The Upper Delaware/Raritan Watershed Priority Area has a mix of agricultural operations that vary considerably in type and size.

This priority area was selected based on its importance to the state's fish and wildlife resources, wetland resources, surface water supply, and farm family heritage. Farming enterprises range from grain production, dairy and beef operations, orchard crops, small fruits and vegetables, poultry operations, horse breeding farms, and nursery operations.

Also, in this priority area, the limestone valleys create many unique challenges in water quality with sinkholes and disappearing streams.

The 1997 round of EQIP brought \$291,010 to the Upper Delaware region. The money to be allocated to this region for the second sign-up has not yet been determined. All of the four Warren County farmers who were approved for funding for EQIP signed conservation contracts on their farms.

Suggested conservation practices for cost-share support fall into three categories: water quality, soil resources, and watershed ecosystem protection and enhancement.

Cost-share incentives will be available as a percentage of actual cost to install (up to 75 percent) or as an incentive payment in the case of management practices.

Practices eligible for cost-share will be based on a Total Resource Management Plan developed specifically for each farm in conjunction with NRCS and the Warren County SCD. Natural resource conservation is the goal of the partnership between two important agencies.

The NRCS and the Warren County SCD work closely together to determine the local natural resource needs and to implement critical programs that help ensure the future of the farmer.

Farmers or farmland owners may contact the Hackettstown Service Center of the NRCS at 908/852-5450 ext. 202 or the Warren County SCD at 908/852-2579.