

# Conference To Examine Ag's Future

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — U.S. Congressman Wayne Gilchrest of Maryland will headline a two-day conference on the economic and environmental future of Mid-Atlantic agriculture that is expected to draw scores of farmers and agriculture groups, agencies, educators, and researchers to the Eastern Shore of Maryland in March.

Titled "Ag Alternatives '98 — Farming for a Better Tomorrow," the conference on March 3 and 4 in the main auditorium of Chesapeake College in Wye Mills, Md., will focus on agriculture in Maryland and Delaware and how it can meet the growing economic and environmental challenges it faces. The Future Harvest Project, a 4-year-old effort by local farmers and residents and agricultural and environmental groups to foster and promote the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of area agriculture, is sponsoring the event.

"Today food is expected not

only to be affordable but also to be produced in a safe and environmentally responsible way," said Michael Heller, Future Harvest Project director. "To that end, this conference will provide information not only on innovative production and marketing options available to farmers, but also on new and improved farming practices and techniques that safeguard the quality of our soil, water, air, and other natural resources."

Gilchrest, who has long championed farmland protection and other agricultural conservation issues in the U.S. Congress, will speak on "Stewardship and Land Ethics in Our Farming and Natural Environment." Other prominent speakers and topics will be Drs. Russ Brinsfield and Ken Staver of the University of Maryland Wye Research and Education Center on the controversial issue of "Nitrogen and Phosphorous Transport from Agriculture to the Bay," Dr.

Fred Magdoff, professor of agronomy at the University of Vermont and one of the nation's most respected soil scientists on "Soil Quality and Soil Health, Ann Harvey Yonkers, Washington Post food writer, farmers' market manager, and distributor of fresh fruits and vegetables, who will moderate a panel (four growers and a chef) discussion on "Successful Direct Marketing — What Really Works." Dr. Michael Kemp, Chesapeake Bay water quality expert

and University of Maryland professor, on agriculture's impact on the bay, and Tim Bowser, co-chair of the national Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture and executive director of the Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture, on the new directions of agriculture and formation of a local organization to help shape its future here.

Other topics to be addressed include the latest environmentally safe farming production practices

for organic grains and vegetables.

The conference is open to the public. Registration is \$40, including lunch on both days. Interested registrants should contact Robin Haggie at the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, (410) 822-5100, or Mark Davis at Delaware State University, (302) 739-6946, or send a \$40 check in care of Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, PO Box 1745, Easton, MD 21601. Registration deadline is Feb. 25.

## Purina Mills Will Close Richmond, Va. Plant

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Purina Mills, Inc. announced recently that the company will close its feed manufacturing facility in Richmond, Va. Production at the plant will be transferred to Purina Mills' facilities in Wilson and Statesville, N.C.; Hagerstown, Md.; and Harrisburg, Pa.

The plant will close by March

31, 1998, affecting 10 employees. Purina Mills will retain ownership of this facility for potential future production of a specialized line of products.

"This transfer is the result of the migration of commercial agriculture from the Richmond marketplace and the need to manufacture our products at more modern and efficient locations," said John Zer-

be, Eastern Regional vice president.

Purina Mills is America's leader in animal nutrition. It is the largest commercial supplier of animal feeds in the United States and has the largest team of animal nutrition researchers of any commercial feed supplier. The company's headquarters are in St. Louis.

## Dairy Of Distinction Program Again Seeks Nice Looking Farms

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) - Do you take pride in maintaining your dairy farm? Does your dairy farm project an attractive, wholesome image to consumers? If so, the Dairy of Distinction Program of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey, will consider your farm for the program's annual recognition awards.

The Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program that oversees the Distinction program was first started in 1983 in Pennsylvania

to recognize the hard work and dedication of the farmers who maintain attractive farms. The purpose of the program is to instill a greater sense of confidence in the wholesomeness of dairy products, and increase their sales.

Farms that apply are judged on the roadside appearance of buildings, grounds, and surroundings, since this is what our dairy product consumers observe as they drive by the farm.

The cleanliness of the barnyard, feed areas, and manure management are all areas taken into consideration when a team of judges takes a look at your farm from a roadside point of view. Judging is conducted during the month of May. Award winners are announced during your local June Dairy Month activities.

To qualify for consideration, you must be actively dairy farming and shipping milk.

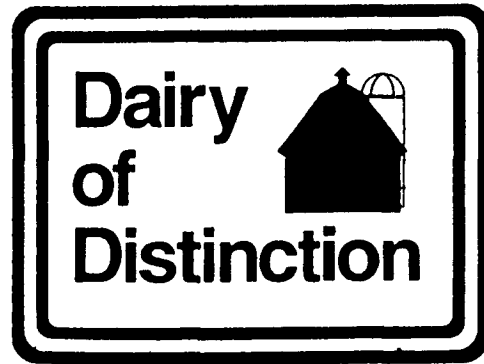
Applications are available for Pennsylvania dairy farms from Michael O'Conner, 324 Henning Building, Dept. of Dairy and Animal Science, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802. Phone: (814) 863-3913.

For New York State applications are available from Carol Keene, RD 1, Box 31, Gilbertsville, NY 13776. Phone: (607) 783-2169.

For New Jersey applications, send to: August Knispel, 641 Sidney Road, Pittstown, NJ 08867. Phone: (908) 735-4989.

All applications must be completed and returned to your state secretary by Wednesday, April 15, 1998.

The Dairy of Distinction program is financed in Pennsylvania by Dairy Farmers through the American Dairy Association Dairy Council and Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program in cooperation with many local agribusiness organizations. The program is conducted with advice and help from Penn State Cooperative Extension.



### HOW IS YOUR FARM SCORED?

Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program, Inc.

Awards will be based upon neatness, good maintenance and other factors which can be controlled by the farmer. Attractive background scenery should not be weighed heavily in judging. All judging observations should be made from a vehicle at one or more points on an adjacent public highway (or if farm is off the road, the nearest lane). Judging should give equal consideration to old wood construction and new construction of metal or concrete block.

The award program may be used for subsequent advertising or promotion activities for dairy products or dairy farming. Farmers who apply for awards agree that, if selected they will cooperate with these activities and make all reasonable efforts to maintain both the exterior and interior of their properties in an acceptable condition.

### HOW THE APPLICATION WORKS

The owner or operator of the dairy farm should sign the application and send it to NEDFBP secretary by April 15.

### HOW THE JUDGING WORKS

Judging teams will visit farms during the month of May. Farms will be judged each year as the award is presented on an annual basis. Any dairy failing to maintain appearance standards will be asked to remove their sign. The Dairy of Distinction signs remain the property of the committee, not the property of the dairy farmer. All farms must achieve a compliance score of 90 percent on their Dairy of Distinction score card. Your cooperative or milk handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality.

### RULES FOR THE DAIRY OF DISTINCTION AWARD

- 1). The Dairy of Distinction sign remains the property of the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee.
- 2). The post and bracket shall be supplied by and maintained by the dairy farmer. It is suggested that a wood post 4' x 4' x 12' or iron pipe 2' x 12' be used. Posts or pipe should be installed and maintained in true vertical position with 8' above ground. Top of the bracket should be lower than six inches from the top of the post.
- 3). Sign shall be displayed in front of the dairy at roadside. An attractive post and bracket, or other frame, shall be used to display the sign. No more than three signs should be displayed from the sign frame or post, and all shall be of a style, general size and quality comparable to the Dairy of Distinction sign. Sign should be secured on all sides to avoid wind damage.
- 4). Signs shall not be moved to other premises. New owners of a Dairy of Distinction farm must apply to retain the sign.
- 5). Replacement of damaged signs shall be the discretion of the committee.
- 6). No producer shall be charged with scoring or sign expense.
- 7). Judges' decisions will be final.
- 8). Judging will take place between May 1st and May 31st.
- 9). Farms awarded a Dairy of Distinction sign in previous years will be judged between April 1st and April 30th. If they do not qualify, they will be rejudged between May 1st and May 31st so they have the opportunity to keep the sign.
- 10). Farms that do not requalify will return the sign to their regional Dairy of Distinction Committee.

### Dairy of Distinction 1998 Pennsylvania Application

#### PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

Attractive dairy farms give the consumer greater confidence in the wholesomeness of milk and stimulate milk sales which encourages public support for the dairy industry. The award gives recognition to the dairy farmer for maintaining a well-kept farmstead.

#### ELIGIBILITY

All Northeast dairy farms producing milk for sale are invited to submit an application for the award. Dairies receiving the 10 highest scores in each of the 21 districts will receive an 18" x 24" Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed in front of their farm.

#### APPLICATION

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cooperative or Handler (where you ship your milk) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Your Handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality)  
 Location (driving directions for judging team) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 County (where your farm is located) \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply to the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee to have my dairy scored in accordance with the rules of the program for the purpose of obtaining a Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed on my premises. (No producer will be charged for scoring or sign expense.)

Signature of Owner/Operator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Return your application by April 15. Send to:

- PENNSYLVANIA, Michael O'Conner, 324 Henning Building, Dept. of Dairy and Animal Science, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802.
- NEW YORK STATE, Carol Keene, RD 1, Box 31, Gilbertsville, NY 13776.
- NEW JERSEY, August Knispel, 641 Sidney Road, Pittstown, NJ 13077.