

Susquehanna County Dairy Day Draws More Than 800

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When considering a new enterprise, it's also important to consider your goals and resources. Is the new project meant to supplement income, replace the existing enterprise, or create on-farm employment? What are your physical resources, marketing potential, financial constraints, or labor availability?

"Some of the most successful alternative agriculture projects are kids' projects," said Bradstreet, "because the kids don't know something won't work. They're willing to try new things."

How you market your product can make or break you success.

There is a hog producer in his area who raises hogs for specialty barbecues. He raises about 150 per year and sells them for \$.65 per pound.

"People don't know what the market price is. People will pay for what they want, not what they have to have," said Bradstreet.

If the thought of alternative agriculture has elevated the stress levels at your farm, you could relate to the wisdom of Karen Bracey, Wyoming County Cooperative Extension agent, in her presentation, "Headbanging 101."

"If there's one thing you can do (to reduce stress), it is to take your work seriously and yourself lightly," said Bracey.

She noted that we tend to make our own stress but we don't necessarily have to carry that stress around with us all the time.

"Once you've been through some really lousy things and survived them, you strengthen your character. That gives us confidence to go through other things and perspective to know what's important and what's not."

She then illustrated her idea of stress as psychological gravity with a bag and 40 pounds of bricks. Each time something stressful happened in her day, like her child throwing a tantrum causing her to



A meal was provided to all Dairy Day participants free of charge, compliments of more than 70 commercial exhibitors. Here Susquehanna County Dairy Ambassador Stacy Rezykowski, right, and Roselyn Adams offer milk to all who come through the line.



Dairyman Roderick Grosvenor of Gibson receives a tetanus vaccination from Pennsylvania Department of Health Injury Prevention Coordinator Theresa Warnagirls at the 1997 Susquehanna County Dairy Day. Warnagirls notes that everyone, especially farmers, should receive a booster every 10 years. In total, 39 tetanus shots were given and 26 participants were screened for skin cancer at the event.



David Bradstreet, Broome County, N.Y. extension agent, exchanges alternative agriculture ideas with dairy producer Dale Empet and maple syrup producer Tim Empet, both of Kingsley. "You've got to throw out all the rules of what you're used to and try new things," said Bradstreet.



Wyoming County Extension Agent Karen Bracey delivers a program on stress management at dairy day.

be late for work, or getting a flat tire, she added yet another brick to her bag. By the end of the day, her bag was full, yet she still had other tasks to complete. The extra "40 pounds" of stress made the remaining tasks more difficult.

"You need to get rid of stress on a regular basis," said Bracey. "If you don't, you won't have the ability to enjoy life because you'll be weighed down."

Bracey admits that some things never go away such as deep pain, but that's OK as long as you get rid of the excess stress.

Bracey employs positive ways to lighten the stress load, such as exercise, prayer, relaxation techniques or fun and humor.

"We need to learn how to have fun," said Bracey. "Smile and laugh whether you feel like it or not. Learn to play. Escape from the center of the universe. . . . The

world will go on even if you're not up on all the current events. Look for the humor in today's crisis."

The theme of feeling good and having a positive attitude was continued by motivational speaker Maria Fanning, who began her talk with a "thank you" from all the people who benefit from dairy farmers.

"I want to thank you from all the chefs of the world and all the wonderful cheesecake that you make possible. I want to thank you for all the people enjoying leisure sports. Because of the time you spend producing food, they don't have to worry about having enough."

She also touched on alternative ways that farmers can make a living, highlighting the immeasur-

able success of Orville Reddenbacher and his popcorn.

"He knew what he was doing and he did it well," said Fanning.

She also touched on the importance of advertising our product and of getting agricultural curriculum in elementary schools.

"We need agriculture in our schools so people know what to do," she said. "My goodness, we're heading toward having a country full of people who don't know how to produce anything!"

Following Fanning's presentation, 27 pies were auctioned off, bringing a total of \$1,308 to be divided between the 4-H dairy program and the dairy princess program.

Visitors, exhibitors, and hosts agreed the day was a success.

"I was very happy," said Place, county extension director.

LDHIA Board Meets In February

JOE GRAYBEAL
President

The committees of LDHIA met in the morning with the full board conducting business in the afternoon. Rodney Denlinger presented tokens of appreciation to the four lab technicians for the recent 100 percent Quality Certification received from NDHIA. The lab has received the 100 percent Quality Certification four consecutive years.

The volume of samples passing through the lab continues to grow. LDHIA is receiving lab work from other affiliates for MUN testing. The new wet chemistry Bentley equipment is performing exceptionally well and allowing some herds to use bulk tank MUN testing on a trial basis. Early results are encouraging but not independently verified. The Board approved a proposal from the lab committee for pricing of samples tested.

The finance committee, chaired by Clair Oberholzer, brought two proposals before the Board. The first was to purchase a new computer for the office. This computer will be used by Pam Lehman to input "basic" herds. LDHIA is experiencing rapid growth in this area, and expects this growth to continue. The second proposal dealt with the method of purchas-



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ing the new Bentley MUN equipment. Both proposals were approved by the Board.

The field committee, chaired by Steve Hershey, updated the Board in several areas of interest. Work is continuing on the appropriate method to promote records of supervised and unsupervised herds. Several approaches are being reviewed with plans to be finalized in the near future.

A proposal was put before the Board to increase field support staff with a part-time position. A substantial number of new herds are joining LDHIA and the increase in staff is expected. The proposal was approved. Time was spent by the Board reviewing the areas now receiving service from LDHIA and where future growth

will likely occur.

The number of herds using PCDART has grown to 70. Steve Hershey and Jere High are updating all PCDART herds to version 6.2. This includes the new graphics program. PCDART workshops are scheduled for March 12 and 19 at the lab.

Jay Mylin, general manager, reported that LDHIA is running smoothly. Everyone is very busy as the increased growth is filling everyone's schedules to the fullest. Management is constantly reviewing operations to keep excellent service to the members while working to keep overhead costs to a minimum. Management is aware that dairy farmers are experiencing similar concerns. The next meeting of the Board is April 16.