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Lancaster Farming



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Penn Manor Hosts State Ag Teachers

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
MILLERSVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — Dr. Blannie Bowen, head of the Agriculture and Extension Education Department in Penn State's College of Agriculture, told a group of agriculture teachers Wednesday night that the department will be "very aggressive well into the next century."

Bowen's speech to the more than 100 teachers from around the state in the Penn Manor High School Library capped a four-day conference, the Professional Technical Institute for Agricultural Educators sponsored by the Pennsylvania Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Association (PVATA). Through improved faculty development and retooling programs where necessary, according to Bowen, work can be done to provide better teachers. Where Penn State is ranked by some as in the top two or three of all educational schools in the country, Bowen

said his goal is to provide "the best ag education program in the country."

The four-day state program at the host school, Penn Manor, allowed ag educational professionals to tour other schools that have renovated and expanded their agriculture instruction facilities.

Included were tours of Solanco High School, remodeled during the 1997-1998 school year.

Solanco features a technology classroom and a newly designed mechanics lab with materials handling and storage.

Another school tour of Manheim Central featured renovations that were completed in 1997. New additions at Manheim include an expanded welding facility, two classrooms, and a horticulture area.

The host school for the conference, Penn Manor, completed renovations this year. The school includes new classrooms, a green-

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Doug Martin, right and partner Paul Holderman are members of the Franklin County Graziers. They believe "open air" housing provides enough room to ensure the cows get enough to eat, are comfortable, can be readily milked, and easily handled. Find out more about their Jersey herd in the special section, *Foraging Around*, this issue. Photo by Andy Andrews

Berks County Dairy Adds New Level To Milking System

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
SHARTELSVILLE (Berks Co.) — Even the dogs had name tags at a recent open house in Berks County of the Skyline Acres dairy facilities.

Members of the family, and the various business representatives all wore name tags, and, according to the family, why not the dogs?

A roughly estimated one thousand visitors toured new facilities for housing and milking 450 cows, owned by the two-family dairy farming operation of John and

Donna Hix, and Terry and Kim Hix.

There were visitors from at least three states, according to car license plates.

While the new facilities went into use in December, it was only more recently that some of the finishing touches were done in order to have a proper public showing.

The open house experience can be priceless for the education and insight gained.

This open house was no exception.

However, there were several

things different about this open house.

While there are a variety of dairy setups in Pennsylvania — everything from very old, thick-walled bank barns; to low-ceilinged tie-stall barns with tunnel ventilation; to the newer open ridged, open-walled post and beam barns — the Hixes' setup is especially unique because it was built to maximize the use of natural ventilation, to easily increase capacity to double the herd size, because aesthetics were given a high priori-

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The winners of the National Holstein Women's Scholarships at the National Holstein Convention last week are from left, seated, Christopher Connelly, Pennsylvania and Andrew Genaschi, California. Standing, Joyce Haggerty, scholarship committee; Jenny Kelsey, New York; Christopher Lahmers, Ohio; Eric Sonnek, Minnesota, and Shirley Keene, scholarship committee. See other photographs on page A20 from the National Convention where both Pennsylvania dairy bowl teams topped the national contest.

Governor's School Is 'Life-Changing Event'

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Agricultural Sciences "has been documented as a life-changing event for students in powerful, positive ways," said Dr. Marianne L. Fivek.

Fivek, director of the school, recently spoke about the goals of the program, which has been underway since June 28 at Penn State and continues until Aug. 1.

Importantly, according to Fivek, an additional "impact" study will be completed next year to show the scope of the school on the lives of graduates. The study

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The Schnecksville Community Fair in Lehigh County had Pennsylvania Ag Secretary, Samuel Hayes, Jr., as the featured speaker for their opening ceremony. Hayes, left, is shown here with Paul Schwarz, president of the fair. The display features this year's chosen commodity, apples. For more pictures from the Schnecksville Fair see page A24.