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Lancaster Farming

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Industry's Changes, Challenges Focus Of Ag Horizons Conference



Directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Cooperatives (PCC) gather at the Ag Horizons 10th annual conference to grapple with ag issues. From left, Randall Meabon, PCC president, stands with board members Dave Hileman, Genex; Donald Cotner, Farm Choice; Ken Shoenberg, Land O' Lakes; Dale Hoover, Pa. DHIA; Steve Hershey, Lancaster DHIA; Dale Hershey, Keystone Farm Credit; and Don Duncan, Sire Power. Photo by Lou Ann Good.

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)

The changing face of agriculture involves complex issues that can confuse even the most knowledgeable ag representative.

In an effort to make sense of it all, a basic overview of the transitions and challenges facing the ag industry was addressed during the 10th annual Ag Horizons Conference at the Wildwood Conference Center, Tuesday.

The conference is designed to help ag educators understand the transitions taking place and how to address these in the classroom.

Many industry representatives praised FFA instructors for giving them a solid agricultural background that enabled them to become successful in ag industries and in farming.

To continue to educate today's youth, it is imperative that teachers grasp a working knowledge of changes and how they affect the industry and cooperatives.

Dr. George Conneman of Cornell University challenged participants to be "proactive" by initiating, evaluating, and integrating changes rather than "reactive" by resisting and challenging changing trends.

Across the U.S., demographics are showing a trend toward cultural diversity, an aging population, two-worker families, and fewer young people. Trends include a shift away from red meats, animal fats, and cholesterol, and an increased need for fresh produce and fiber in diets.

Consumer concerns for a safe food supply comes at the same time as environmental concerns increase.

"I predict that EPA will become more important than USDA and will govern more," Conneman said.

Biotechnology, genetic engineering, and global trade spin a web of opportunity. Record keeping and information increase. "But

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President Declares Several Counties Federal Disaster Areas

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — County, state and federal agriculture officials have been busy this week working to deter-

mine and document drought-caused farm losses to forward to the USDA to establish disaster assistance eligibility. At the same time, Cooperative Extension specialists have been calling for emergency drought meetings to provide farmers with information and to answer

questions. A special Cooperative Extension satellite downlink program to provide drought information and answer specific questions from participants is scheduled to be held

who need hay, and those who have hay to sell. According to a state Department of Agriculture drought fact sheet, the Haynet is "a computer-based service providing the names, addresses and telephone numbers of hay dealers across Pennsylvania. Maintained and operated by Penn State University College of Agricultural Sciences, the service

is free for buyers and sellers. "Anyone with a computer and modem can access the service at www.cas.psu.edu/docs/cashome/drought/haynet.html or by calling (814) 863-2713."

Local, national and international news media have turned their attention to drought problems in the Mid-Atlantic states where the drought has hit hard, with no relief in sight.

Late July estimates of recovery of groundwater for southcentral Pennsylvania, indicated that recovery will take much time and much more rain than historically has fallen through the end of the year.

On Monday, August 2, President Clinton declared West Virginia and four contiguous counties in southwestern Pennsylvania, a federal disaster area.

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19 Counties Get 'OK' For Haying, Grazing CRP Land

mine and document drought-caused farm losses to forward to the USDA to establish disaster assistance eligibility.

At the same time, Cooperative Extension specialists have been calling for emergency drought meetings to provide farmers with information and to answer

at regional downlink sites across the state, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., August 10. Check with a local Cooperative Extension office for local details.

Also, Penn State University Cooperative Extension this week has set up a "Hay Net" information exchange program for those

Empire Farm Days Highlight Latest Farm Technology, All In One Place

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
SENECA FALLS, N.Y. — For three days next week the Rodman Lott and Son Farm, near here, will host the annual Empire Farm Days.

The event allows farmers an opportunity to see the latest ag techniques and technologies at one time and in one place.

At the ag showcase event, scheduled Aug. 10-12, more than 600 exhibitors, featuring more than 3,000 brand names, will have their wares on display. Not only will visitors be able to see demonstrations of the technology available, but the site is host to a series of dairy profit seminars focused on the latest in management and profitability strategies.

With more than 100 acres of agricultural displays, Empire Farm Days will feature a variety of demonstrations, including improved and expanded timber, construction, and livestock displays, livestock handling demonstrations, an antique tractor parade, a ride and drive area, and other big events.

Farm health and safety associations meet at the event to provide farmers free health screenings and life-saving demonstrations. Farm family programs offer daily activi-

ties designed to help farm families meet today's farm lifestyle challenges, according to event organizers.

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Newly-crowned Maryland Dairy Princess Jeena Rinehart hugs her pint-sized escort Elizabeth Davis. Jeena, 16, was crowned during the 38th annual pageant at the Holiday Inn, Frederick, recently. See story on page A33.



Briana Shealer, Auburn, right, won grand champion market swine Wednesday at the Schuylkill County Fair with her Hampshire crossbred gilt, "Sheera." Show judge was Robert Dinsmore. An extensive list of winners, photos, and show placings start on page A30. Photo by Andy Andrews