

# PA DHIA Goes International

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ernarians have informed us that they would be willing to be instructors to foreign dairy farmers.

The Polish Breeders Federation, a private farmers association in Poland is planning to take over the milk recording business from the government. The Polish government has been privatizing state business ever since they left the communist system. With the help of Norm Hershey, President of PA DHIA, we conducted seminars already in Poland on cooperative development. If all goes as well this Polish Cooperative will be a sister coop to PA DHIA. Farmer to farmer working together.

What is in it for PA DHIA members? By processing records, licensing software, and selling consultant services, PA DHIA members will have dairymen all over the world sharing the overhead

of our cooperative. Also, profits from our international business will eventually be distributed to our members. Finally, foreign dairymen want to purchase our genetics. Though PA DHIA does not plan to get into the cattle business, we do want to facilitate the domestic and foreign market for cattle and embryos. HeiferNet is the next phase of Barn Owl. From our data base of members we will be able to locate genetics that meet the buyers specifications by herd code numbers, and identification numbers.

The world is Big. The population is growing. Milk consumption is growing worldwide. The dairymen of the world that want to improve their efficiency and milk quality want to work with Pennsylvania dairy farmers and their own cooperative. Farmer to farmer helping each other.



Polish milk recording technician testing cows in a Polish herd. This herd will be processing with PA DHIA.

## Relationship Between Milk Production And Reproductive Performance

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STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — How much impact does high production have upon reproductive performance? Most studies monitoring the genetic relationship between milk yield and reproductive performance indicate there is a slight but adverse relationship. It is very difficult to select for fertility because even the highest estimates of heritability for reproduction are less than 10 percent. In well-controlled studies, age of cow and clinical problems, during and after calving had more of an adverse impact upon reproduction than did level of milk production. Cows in third or later lactation have lower conception rates, longer intervals to first ovulation and first service than cows in earlier lactations. In addition to proper nutrition during early lactation, there are three areas of management which should help to minimize the effect of age on reproductive performance: proper dry cow nutrition, maintaining cow comfort and minimizing health problems around the time of parturition. A routine and aggressive veterinary reproductive health program is important to minimizing postpartum problems and maintaining good reproductive performance.

On a herd basis, what is the relationship between level of production and reproductive performance? Several extensive summaries from DHIA processing centers across the country have examined this question. In general, when herds were categorized into various groups based upon levels of milk production, the groups with the highest producing

herds had the better reproductive performance. Although services per conception were slightly higher in the higher producing herds, days to first service, days open were lower and heat detection efficiency was higher in the better producing herds. The total culling rate and culling for reproductive reasons were similar across production groups. These summaries involving several thousand herds also document that the larger herds tended to have the higher rolling herd averages.

These trends indicate that solid management practices can help to minimize the negative impact of high milk yield on reproductive performance. A systematic approach to reproductive management is more likely applied in high producing herds that achieve good reproductive performance. This approach would include:

- Maintaining appropriate body condition throughout lactation. Cows with severe change in body condition (greater than 1 point loss on a scale of 1 to 5) during the first five weeks postpartum tend to have an extended interval to first ovulation, first observed estrus, days open and reduced conception rate compared to cows with only minor or moderate body condition change.

- Adopting a sound dry cow feeding program: The key to any successful dry cow program is maintaining dry matter intake prior to calving. Success can be achieved by incorporating both good management practices by the producer and working with a competent nutritionist. Dry cows should be fed a controlled ration of both forage and grain. A true total mixed ration can accomplish this goal. Dry cows should be fed feeds that are free of molds and mycotoxins. Cows should

calve in individual pens that are clean and dry. Protocols should be established for calving and health care for at least the first 10 days post-calving.

- Maximize energy intake during early lactation without overfeeding concentrates so cows consistently initiate estrous cycles before 40 days. The only way to accomplish this is to feed high quality forages. They should be free of molds and mycotoxins. Avoid feeding any spoiled or poorly fermented feeds. The goal during this period is to encourage dry matter intakes. Even though it is important to maximize energy intake, forage and fiber are essential to maintaining a health

rumen and keeping cows on feed.

- Utilize a plan whereby the prebreeding heat detection rate is high so that a high percentage of the herd becomes pregnant early in lactation. This would include using an estrous-synchronization program and routine heat detection to ensure timely first service.

- Observe for heats frequently and on a routine basis so that the post-breeding heat detection rate is high and intervals between heats/services are minimized. This may include use of effective estrous detection aids.

- Implement a preventive herd health program, which includes a timely, and effective

vaccination program, sanitation and cow comfort, maintenance of accurate and complete health records and

consultation with the herd veterinarian.

In Pennsylvania, dairy cattle should be vaccinated for the following diseases which affect reproduction: Leptospirosis, IBR and BVD.

Optimum reproduction and profitable levels of production are compatible. However, dairy producers and their management teams are challenged to maintain this relationship. Summary data from several sources show that this can be accomplished.

## New Millennium Offers Challenges

**DAVID BIGELOW**  
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STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — As we are ushered into a new millennium, dairy management records are vitally important in facing the challenges of the dairy business. Past experience and research is evidence to the fact that herds enrolled in a DHIA program have the tools available to make quick decisions in the management of the herd. A computerized program named Barn Owl 2000 along with the same-day test reports available from PA DHIA technicians on test day make for a winning combination.

Benefits are great from receiving testing services through the highest rated DHIA in the United States when it comes to the highest percentage of cow records being utilized for sire evaluations. PA DHIA stands head and shoulders above the rest with an astounding 87% useable record base being analyzed by USDA. The dairy

industry has benefited greatly in the past several years due to a continual climb upward of the useable record utilization. Young sire benefits along with the simple identification of each cow in the herd is not taken lightly as technicians are trained and directed in doing the optimum technician service.

A great technician workforce makes for a winning

combination when it comes to providing service to the dairymen. Over 95 percent of all the technician base averages 14 or more years of service. We are happy to offer experience and accountability where it matters most. Whether it would be a dairyman in Chester County receiving service from Gerald Miller, a 56-year veteran, or a dairyman in Lancaster County receiving services from Jay Risser, a 47-year veteran of PA DHIA, customer service continues to be at the top of the list in all the PA DHIA service area.

Maximize your benefits available today by being enrolled on a PA DHIA program. A vast array of herd management services are available ranging from an owner sampler program, which has seen a tremendous growth of 10,000 cows for a seventy percent increase in business over the past one year one half to a full service am-pm record system.

Call today to have a PA DHIA representative stop by to explain the vast array of programs available. Simply call 1-800-344-8378 to make your request known.



The dairy industry has identified opportunities to increase demand for fluid milk through improved packaging and greater variety of flavors.