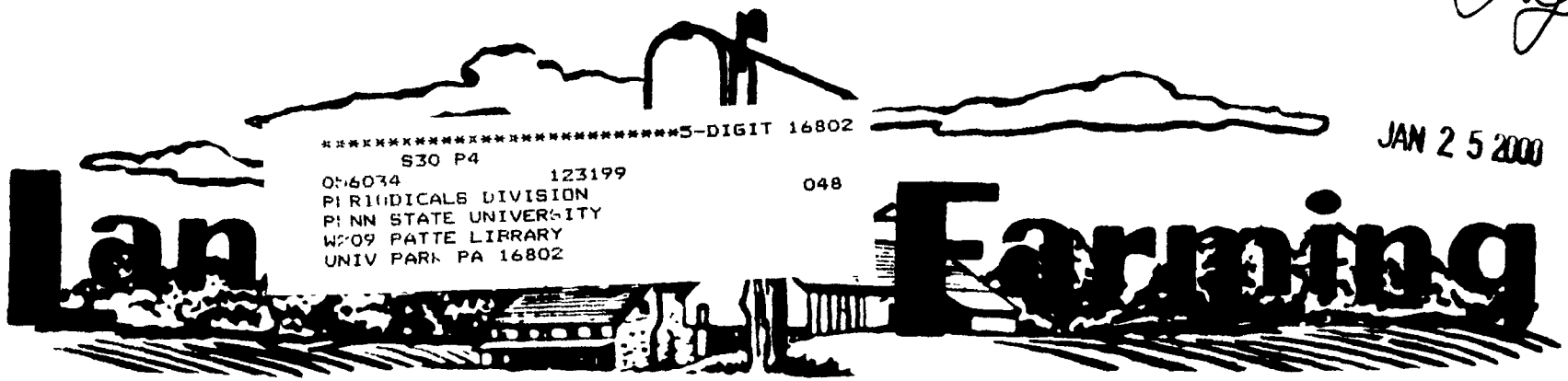


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Five Sections

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, January 22, 2000

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# Farmers Can Weather Current Milk Price Crunch

**JAYNE SEBRIGHT**  
*Lancaster Farming Staff*  
**EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.)**  
— There's no easy way around it: milk prices have hit a 22-year low, leaving many dairy farmers

reeling with uncertainty about what the next year will bring. Some farmers are angry and pointing the finger at whomever to blame, while others are ready just to throw in the towel.

But wait, how did this happen when the market was doing so well? How did prices get this low, how long will they last, and what can farmers do to survive the price crunch?

According to Ken Bailey, associate professor of dairy markets and policy for the Pennsylvania State University, it is basically the law of supply and demand.

"In 1998 and 1999, there were a lot of incentives to expand, and the industry expanded too quickly," said Bailey.

"Milk production increased 12 percent in the West. The excess milk went into cheese, increasing cheese production by

six percent. The market rolled along pretty well until people figured out that there was too much supply, then the market fell."

So why should the Northeast dairy producers suffer low prices when the West is responsible for the excess production? Milk is marketed nationally. And, while it has always been marketed nationally, it's just starting to hit really hard now.

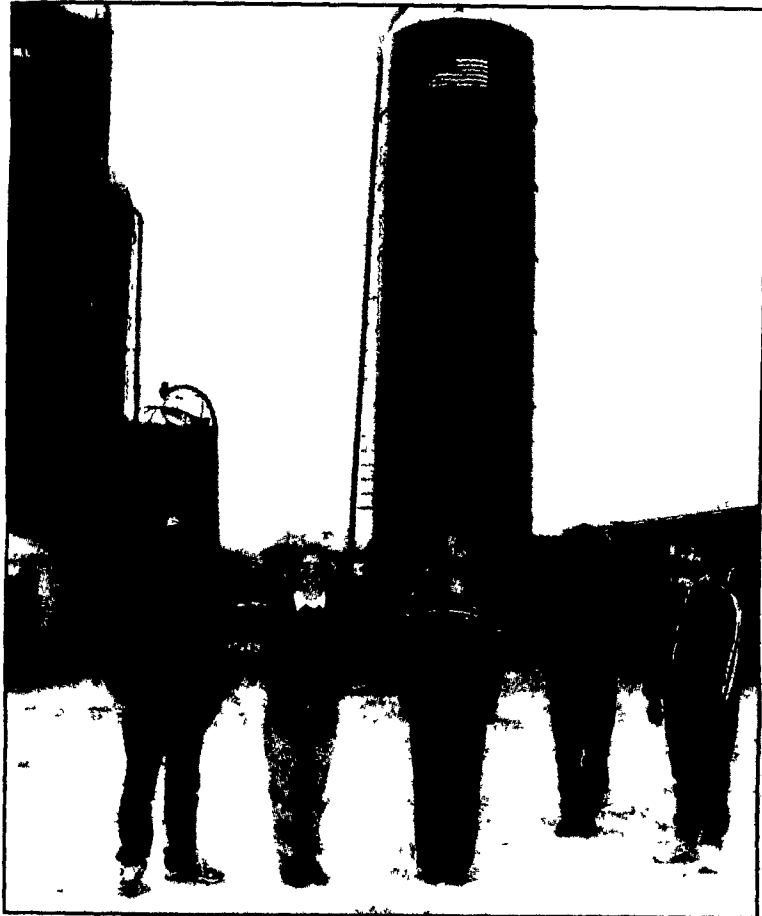
"The foundation of our country was built on open borders between states," said Bailey. "But, now with more interstate highways and a new information age, it's even more of an open marketplace. Pennsylvania

farmers have to compete with farmers in Idaho."

According to Bailey, soon Pennsylvania producers will be competing with farmers in New Zealand and Australia because the dairy industry is going to become a global marketplace.

Some farmers may be thinking that, even though it's an open marketplace, transportation prices should still come into play. Farmers in the East are much closer to the consumers, so they should get better prices. But the cost of transporting cheese from Idaho to Chicago is only three to five cents per hun-

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Lebanon County Dairy Princess Amanda Martin is busy on the family's 163-acre farm. Turn to page B14 to read about the Martin family, from left, Eugene, Allison, Amanda, Andy, and Kathleen. Photo by Lou Ann Good.

# Proper Manure Handling Key To Controlling Foodborne Illness

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
*Lancaster Farming Staff*  
**NEW HOLLAND (Lancaster Co.)** — Producers shouldn't have to face public outbreaks of foodborne illness to make changes to their operations to prevent the problem, according to a vegetable specialist from Cornell University.

Controlling foodborne illness can be as simple as cultural practices to control plant disease, according to Dr. Anusuya

Rangarajan, Cornell vegetable specialist.

Rangarajan spoke Monday afternoon to about 200 vegetable and fruit growers and industry representatives at the annual New Holland Vegetable Day at Yoder's Restaurant.

In a 1998 survey, consumers noted that foodborne pathogens concerned them more than alleged pesticide contamination in food, according to Rangarajan.

Rangarajan, who serves growers who manage fields

ranging from one acre to 5,000 acres, spoke about the backlash in her own industry because of fears of food contamination.

About a year ago, in New York state, cabbage processors refused to accept cabbage grown on any ground preceded by a manure application. Manure from any living source — human, livestock, or poultry — can be rife with deadly bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

Producers are often in a quan-

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# Sen. Wenger Challenges Foundation To Continue Ag Support

**LOU ANN GOOD**  
*Lancaster Farming Staff*  
**LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)** — Thirty-six years ago the Home and Farm Center, 1383 Arcadia Road, was erected to serve Lancaster County's agri-

culture and agribusiness concerns.

Today the center is a hub for city and county activities housing major offices for the extension, USDA, Soil Conservation Service, and other agricultural-

related organizations. It also serves as a meeting place for many civic, political, and commercial organizations.

"I'm glad people had the foresight and vision 37 years ago to

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Lancaster Farm and Home Foundation decisions are handled, from left, by Luke Brubaker, president; Larry Weaver, vice president; and newly elected directors Lloyd Welk, Dorothy Charles, Larry Groff, Linda Esbenshade, J. Robert Kindig, Paul Wogemuth Jr., and Jim Kettering. Photo by Lou Ann Good.



# Grower & Marketer Section Shows Colors Of Gardening

Kathy Engle-Debes, Master Gardener, and Tom Becker, York County horticulture agent, inspect the petunias growing in a trial garden. Varieties include Pink, Misty Lilac, and Purple Wave. The garden — and other topics of interest to fruit and vegetable growers — are highlighted in the special Grower & Marketer section this issue. Photo by Jinny Wilt