



Dairy Of Distinction Is Public Relations Tool For Farm And Industry

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does," said Zimmerman. "It's a good public relations tool — just the name means there's something special about the farm."

According to Hileman, the program's objective is not just to reward farmers for keeping their barns painted, it's to promote milk. "What better promotion for milk is there than keeping the farms neat and clean," said Hileman.

In Hileman's district, the committee hosts a banquet to honor the new Dairy of Distinction award winners. During the banquet, slides of each farm are shown and the entire family is recognized.

"The committee contacts local banks and businesses to sponsor the banquet," said Hileman. "Because of our fund raising efforts, we are able to provide four tickets for each winning family."

Past Dairy of Distinction winners are also invited to the banquet. Last year 88 people attended the banquet honoring the District 14 Dairy of Distinction winners.

The Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program oversees the Dairy of Distinction program for Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont. Winners are presented with a Dairy of Distinction sign that they can post at their farm's entrance.

Pennsylvania winners of the Dairy of Distinction program are also honored during Ag Progress Days in State College and are featured in a special section of *Lancaster Farming*. The paper will also provide Pennsylvania winners with an 11x14 color photograph of their farm.

Zimmerman encourages fellow farmers to apply for the Dairy of Distinction award. "It shows people that we are proud to be farmers," said Zimmerman. "It's an honor and a privilege to display that sign."

"You don't have to have some big wonderful showplace. It's just about keeping your farm nice and clean," said Zimmerman. "Besides, as a farmer, when I see a farm that isn't kept up, it makes me wonder how their farming practices are."

Pennsylvania dairy farmers can apply for the Dairy of Distinction award by sending this application to Michael O'Conner, Penn State University, by April 15, 2000.

YORK (York Co.) — Area sheep producers are invited to attend a three-part sheep series planned here for three Tuesday evenings beginning Tuesday, Feb. 15, from 7 p.m.-9 p.m., and continuing Feb. 15, 22, and 29.

The meetings will be conducted at the Penn State Cooperative Extension Office in East York in the county Annex Building.

Keeping up with health information when caring for livestock is always important. Dr. Tom Drake from Penn State's Veterinary Diagnostic Lab will discuss some of the most challenging sheep health concerns. These include Johne's disease in sheep, foot rot, ovine progressive pneumonia, Caseous Lymphadenitis, and scrapie. Tips for

prevention and management interventions will be highlighted. This presentation will take place at the Feb. 15 meeting.

Specialization in the sheep enterprise may provide some excellent marketing opportunities. Producers may want to learn ways to process their wool into consumer products to add value to the commodity. Sheep producers Gretta Dise, Glen Rock, and Leslie Orndorff, Brodbeck, will provide tips on what producers can do with their wool. This will include ideas for having wool processed into consumer products or carded for hand spinning or quilt batts. The discussion will address ways to utilize wool from meat breeds. Crafty items made with wool will be shown at the Feb. 22 ses-

sion.

Dealing with dead sheep is more challenging without rendering plants willing to process them. Building an on-farm composter for sheep disposal is an excellent way to handle this problem. David Greene, retired Carroll County extension director and sheep producer, will discuss how to construct a composter. Opportunities in the sheep industry are increasingly available in niche and specialty markets.

Advance registration is requested by the day of the first session on Feb. 15 to the customer service desk at the York Extension Office, (717) 840-7408. Cost for all three sessions is \$5/farm operation to cover the cost of materials.

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