

Mercer County Farmer Is Positive About Dairying

(Continued from Page A21)

- 2) Be the lowest cost producer. Everyone gets the same price for their milk. The only handle you have is to keep cost down.
- 3) Analyze your top five expenditures. Only focus on

the costs that will really impact your bottom line, like feed. Then cut those cost.

- 4) Don't let a short cash flow interfere with profitability. If you can save money purchasing send in Febru-

ary, consider a line of credit to do it. Don't cut corners now that will cost you later.
 5) Maximize your most limited resource. If your barn is full, maximize production. If your capital is limited, spend it on cows instead of equipment. Every farmer has a different resource that is most limited. It's up to you to maximize it.

Feedlot QA: Blueprint

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — A new Penn State College of Agriculture Extension assistant position has been created to begin the groundwork of a feedlot quality assurance program called "Blueprint For Success For Feeding Cattle In Pennsylvania."

The program will be conducted with help from Wendall Landis, who works as a beef nutritional consultant for Agri-Basics, Elizabethtown. Landis begins his work with the blueprint program Feb. 21, according to John Comerford, Penn State beef specialist, Tuesday at the Lancaster Cattle Feeder's Day at the Farm and Home Center.

Landis, a 1999 graduate of Penn State with a degree in dairy and animal science, will be talking to cattle feeders about the program. He will see just how many quality assurance programs are being undertaken and in what ways at various feedlots throughout Pennsylvania.

Landis will work out of the Pennsylvania Beef Council office in Middletown.

The 10-point benchmark for quality cattle includes:

1. Carcasses with a USDA quality grade of Choice or better to reach and exceed consumers' "window of acceptability."

2. A carcass weight of 700-900 pounds to help ensure tenderness, quality factors, and portion sizes acceptable to consumers.

3. A yield grade of 1, 2, or 3 to reduce fat, make beef more visually attractive, and influence tenderness and consistency.

4. No distinguishing dairy or Brahman characteristics. Identify breed and feeding systems for premium programs that address eating quality, value, safety, and nutrition.

5. Fed high energy feeds for at least 120 days to meet consumer demands for uniformity and flavor.

6. Healthy cattle that produce safe and desirable beef.

7. Free of carcass blemishes that may detract from consumer value and ensure appropriate animal husbandry practices.

8. Less than 20-24 months of age at slaughter to positively influence tenderness and high consumer demand.

9. High growth rate with desirable feed conversion to make more efficient use of feed, water, land resources, and reduce production of animal wastes.

10. Produced in environmentally friendly conditions that target excellent animal welfare and positive community relations.

The position is one of extension to study the impact that quality assurance programs can have on profitability.

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