

## Hoof Clinic Held At University Park

**GAIL STROCK**  
**Mifflin Co. Correspondent**  
 STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.)—Ask some people to list the most important parts of a dairy cow and very few would even think of the hooves. But to the 375 people who attended the Pennsylvania Foot Clinic at Penn State's Ag Arena on Friday, February 4, good hoof health is very important.

Dairy producers, veterinarians, nutritionists, researchers, agribusiness representatives, and other consultants came to hear dairy industry specialists speak of the various issues that affect hoof health. Nearly 60 hoof trimmers, from as far away as Ontario, Canada, came also to watch hoof trimming demonstrations on dairy cows with various foot problems.

Professional hoof trimmer Paul Neer, Belleville, hosted and coordinated the event along with sponsors from Agway, Monsanto Dairy Business, Roche Vitamins, and Zinpro Corporation. Neer sponsored a similar appreciation clinic two years ago in Belleville. Nearly 250 dairy producers, veterinarians, hoof trimmers, and nutritionists attended that event.

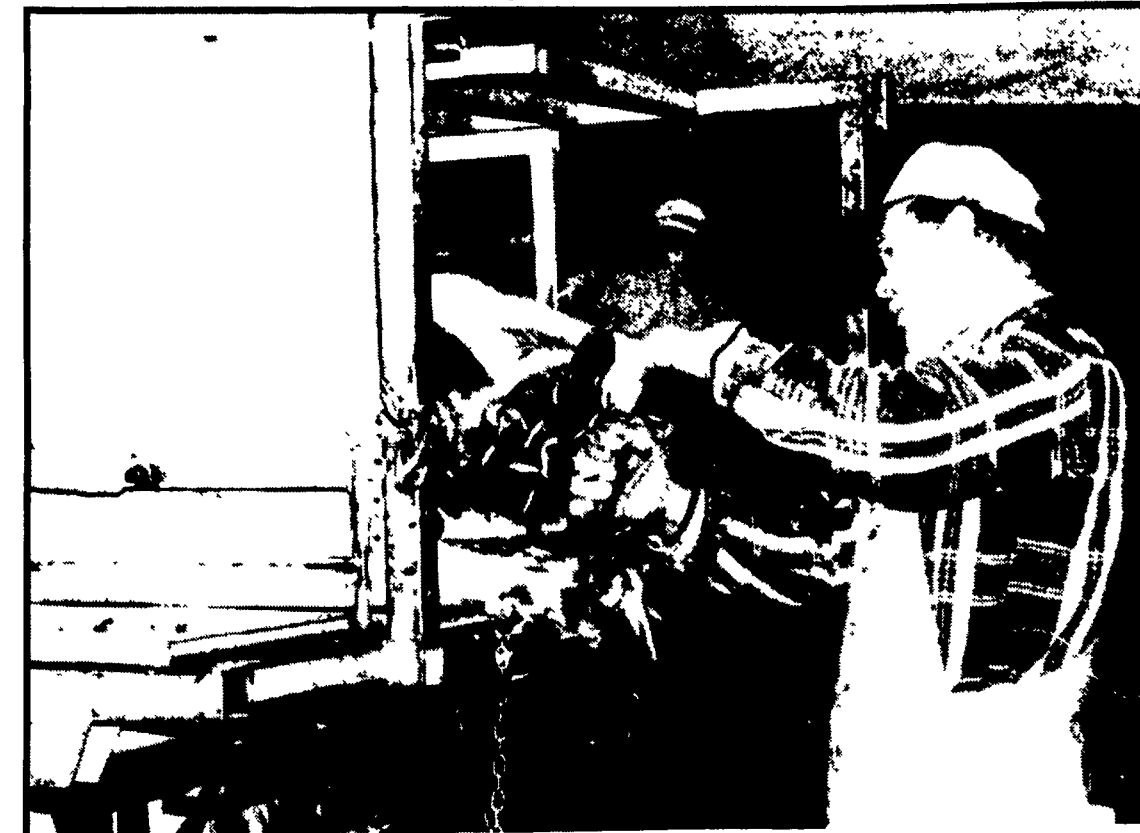
"There are a lot of theories about chutes, chipper tools, and the best combinations," Neer said as he welcomed the crowd,

"but I say it [the quality of the hoof trim] is only as good as the guy behind it." Neer, a firm believer in hoof maintenance, then introduced Penn State Extension Agent Dan McFarland who talked about the importance of proper housing and environment for cow comfort.

"Make sure whoever lays your concrete is your best friend," McFarland said as he went on to compare bare ground and solid concrete qualities, the various concrete surfaces, and the use of sand, grit, and rubber in alleys. He said other factors that influence hoof health include frequency of manure removal, design of rest areas, ventilation, feeding ration, access to outside, and overcrowding.

Executive Director of the Hoof Trimmers Association, Nichelle Martin, from Wisconsin, introduced Dr. Jan Shearer from the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. Shearer spoke about cow anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, and the importance of hoof trimming.

"Ninety percent of lameness is in the foot. Ninety percent of that in the foot involves the rear feet. Seventy to ninety percent



Hoof trimmer Dale Herr of Lancaster demonstrates maintenance trimming.

of that involves the outside claw," Shearer explained. He went on to say that cow comfort is critical to the whole issue of hoof health.

The morning session ended with hoof trimming demonstra-

tions. Participants moved throughout the Ag Arena to watch ten hoof trimmers demonstrate maintenance and problem hoof trimming.

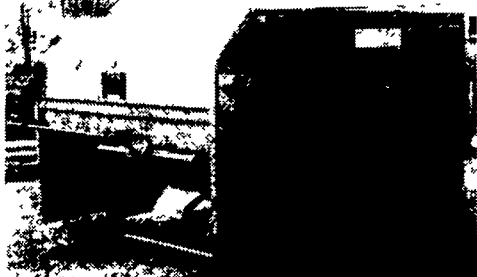
In the afternoon, Dr. William Seymour, a nutritionist with

Roche Vitamins, spoke about biotin and hoof health while Dr. Chris Canale, a nutritionist with Agway, spoke about laminitis and nutrition.



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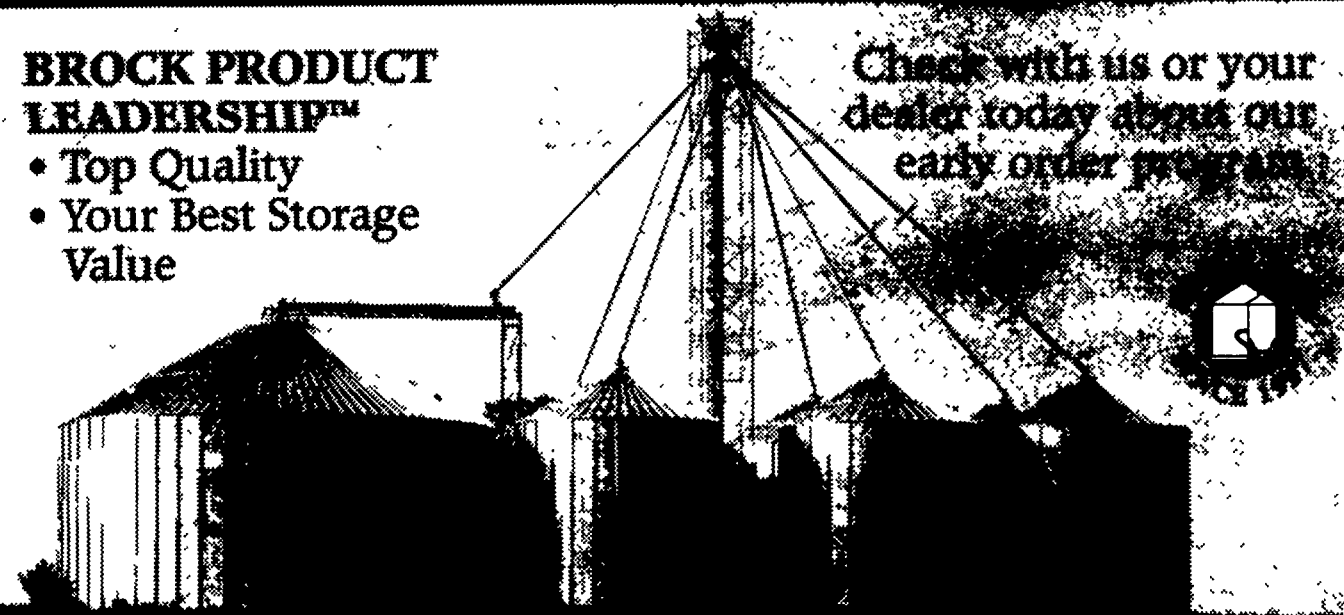
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**RSVP needed by March 14, 2000**  
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