

# 101 Farms In 100 Days

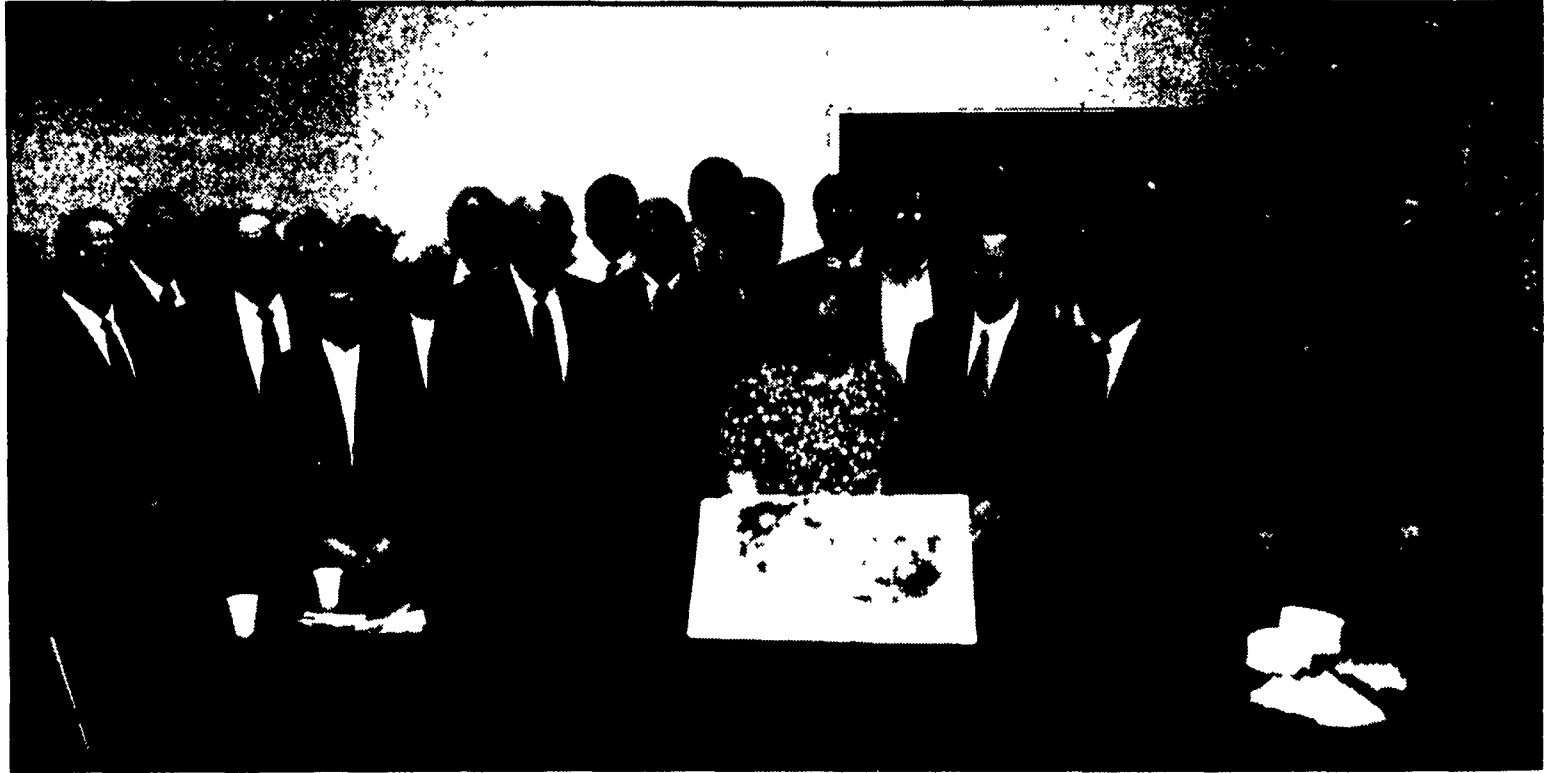
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"Just as agriculture was the life-blood of our Commonwealth's past, it is also the key to a prosperous future. Our farmers must always be the defining characteristic of Pennsylvania's landscape. That's why we start the new millennium by committing \$100 million over the next five years to preserve our Commonwealth's precious farmland.

"It's a compelling acknowledgement of the basic truth that our environment is not inherited from our parents, but borrowed from our children. Agriculture is inescapably entwined with our environment."

Also at the board meeting, Russell Nickel was honored for his work on the farmland preservation board since it was created in 1989.

The farmland preservation program allows the state and counties to purchase development rights, referred to as easements, to guarantee that farms will remain as agricultural land. The funds for farmland preservation in the "Growing Greener" program come from Gov. Ridge's top legislative priority last fall when he signed into law nearly \$650 million to protect open space, eliminate the maintenance backlog in state parks, clean up abandoned



To celebrate the preservation of 101 farms in Gov. Tom Ridge's time table of 100 days, these members of the state and local farmland preservation boards pose just before

the cake is cut. The latest group of 34 farms were approved at the state preservation board meeting Thursday. Photo by Everett Newswanger, editor.

mines, restore watersheds, provide funds for recreational trails, help communities address land use, provide new and upgraded water and sewer system along with preserving farmland.

Last month Gov. Ridge unveiled his 2000-01 budget proposing \$135 million to fund the second year of the five-year initiative. These funds will come

from \$100 million in new money from the general fund and \$35 million in funds redirected from the recycling and hazardous sites cleanup funds and the landfall closure accounts.

To mark the event, a large celebration cake was on hand at the close of the board meeting for everyone present to commemorate the "momentous milestone."

## Use of Bulk Tank Milk Somatic Cell Count To Assess Udder Health

Bhushan Jayarao, MVSc, Ph.D, MPH

Extension Veterinarian

Analysis of bulk tank somatic cell counts (BTSCC) along with bulk tank milk culturing for mastitis pathogens can be used effectively to monitor herd udder health status. Bulk tank somatic cell counts (BTSCC) in milk is comprised mostly of leukocytes that enter the udder to destroy mastitis causing bacteria and to repair damaged udder tissue.

All milk samples will contain some somatic cells, however their numbers increase considerably when an mastitis causing bacteria cause inflammation, or there is injury to the udder. Injured mammary tissue and high number of somatic cells following an infection can clog the tiny milk ducts in the udder which in turn results in lowered secretion and production.

Although somatic cells are always present in milk, their numbers vary significantly

among both infected and uninfected cows. Variations in SCC are also influenced by the stage of lactation, season of the year, and individual cow response to infection. Taking into account

these factors, it is difficult to assess udder health in a herd from BTSCC's with just one sample.

Work done at Penn State has shown that at least 4-6 raw milk

samples tested for BTSCC over a 8-12 week period to be extremely helpful in making decisions with regard to udder health status of a herd.

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