

New PPPC President:

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continue in some way, noted Barbara Wiand, new PPPC president from Mifflinburg.

Wiand succeeds former PPPC president David Reinecker, York Springs.

Wiand operates Wiand Enterprises, a 300-sow farrow-to-finish herd in Union County.

Wiand, with help from husband Glenn, sons Justin, 7, and Michael, 5, and two full-time employees, produces about 7,000 feeder pigs per year. While a small percentage of these pigs get marketed as show pigs and breeding stock, the majority of the pigs are finished and marketed to Hatfield and Leidy's.

Wiand strives to use the best combination of genetic lines to produce hogs that not only grow fast, but also cut well for the packers. Yorkshires, Durocs, and Hampshires are utilized in the breeding program. Wiand uses AI, strict biosecurity, and phase feeding to produce high quality hogs.

Her husband manages Wiand Farms, a 1,300-acre cropland and feed enterprise.

Wiand began in the hog business in 1989 after working for several years as a critical care nurse. She decided that, to raise a family, staying home on the farm would be the right thing to do.

Her two sons, Justin and Michael, don't have any major responsibilities on the farm yet, though they enjoy feeding the sows and helping load market hogs, Wiand noted.

During the great hog depression of 1998-1999, Wiand knows many producers, with old facilities and difficulty securing a market for their hogs, went out of business.

The big challenge facing producers is the pork checkoff referendum directed by Ag Secretary Dan Glickman (see the story on page A34 of the March 11 *Lancaster Farming*.) A referendum, noted Wiand, is

scheduled sometime in the late summer or early fall this year.

Producers can decide to keep the checkoff, important to helping educate producers and consumers about pork, or get rid of it — raising questions about how educational and promotional programs for pork nationwide will continue.

But the state Keystone Pork Expo, conducted every year at the Lebanon Fairgrounds in mid-February, will continue.

"We've had that for many, many years," Wiand said. At the Expo, pork producers can learn about the latest products and management techniques.

"I think it would continue — perhaps in a different form or different place, no matter what," she said.

The large vertical integrators have done a lot to promote their own pork and funded pork research. Millions of dollars have gone privately to managing PRV and other swine diseases.

Despite the anticipated changes because of the referendum, pork producers don't have to feel glum.

"There are some major things coming down the pike," said Wiand. One direction the PPPC wants to go: increase discussions with packers.

One initiative under review, Wiand said, is a national cooperative of producers that will focus on marketing as well as production. The cooperative, named Pork America, could serve to unite packers and producers.

And soon, the state will be close to complete eradication of the pseudorabies virus (PRV).

The state is already at Level IV of the PRV eradication program, with only several monitored herds left.

"We are moving close to complete eradication," said Wiand.

"This is exciting news. Many people have worked diligently to get to this point."

As for complete eradication of PRV, "we are getting very close,

very close," she said.

In addition to the PRV program, Pennsylvania pork producers have also been very active in the Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) certification program and the On-Farm Odor/Environmental Assistance Program. Pennsylvania has been recognized by NPPC for having one of the highest participation levels in the U.S., Wiand noted.

Pork futures prices, said Wiand, are approaching \$56 per hundredweight for June futures.

She has seen increased expansion when prices rebounded so well in the past, which could leave room for another potential market price dip. People, said Wiand, are "gun-shy" about expansion, in light of what happened to the pork prices in 1998-1999.

Many of those producers are not coming back to the business.

A new and exciting development, Wiand noted, is the Penn State "Environmental Standards of Production for Larger Pork Producers in Pennsylvania" publication in addition to a new "Environmental Certification Course For Livestock Producers," to be offered at the local level. The course is being coordinated by Ken Kephart, Penn State swine specialist, with the help from local extension and industry.

The course will provide environmental awareness, nutrient management, odor control, and an overview of regulations for the pork producer, noted Kephart. The course has received funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania Conservation Commission.

The course uses the environmental education and a best management practices manual for producers.

Preliminary work is under way on using the course component along with information on producers' nutrient management and conservation plans to actually place a label on all

products leaving the plant with an "environmental label," said Kephart. The message of the label will convey to the consumer that the pork produced meets industry standard environmental quality guidelines.

Wiand began her career after "retiring" as a critical care nurse from the Evangelical Hospital in Lewisburg. She produced 4-H swine show projects when she was a child and exhib-

ited projects at local fairs and the Farm Show. Her family cared for a few sows. Wiand enjoyed the experience so much she decided that, when it came time to raise a family, she would include her own children.

Wiand was selected Pork All-American and will receive the award at the World Pork Expo in Indianapolis, Ind., June 8-10.

Farm Bureau Calls For Drought Aid Legislation

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is calling for passage of legislation which will enable all of the drought assistance provided by the General Assembly to be distributed to Pennsylvania farmers.

"As it stands now, farmers who suffered losses during last year's terrible drought will only receive about one-third of the available state aid," said Guy Donaldson, president of the statewide farm organization. "Even though there is a great need, the rest will go back to the state treasury at the end of the year unless the program can be changed."

Crop losses in Pennsylvania because of last year's drought have been estimated at between \$500 million and \$700 million. The General Assembly last December provided \$60 million for drought relief with the stipulation that payments to individual producers would be limited to no more than 75 percent of federal disaster assistance.

"Congress had approved \$1.2 billion for a variety of weather disasters which occurred around the country last year including severe hurricane damage in the South," recalled Donaldson. "At the time it was believed Pennsylvania farmers' share of the federal aid would total \$75

million, so the 75 percent cap on state aid seemed to be justified."

The sign-up for federal and state disaster aid took place over the winter months. About 7,000 Pennsylvania farmers applied for and received drought assistance. "Now with the sign-ups completed and applications processed around the country, it appears that Pennsylvania farmers' share of the available federal aid will only total about \$31 million," said Donaldson. "The 75 percent limit on state drought relief will reduce state assistance to about \$23 million — roughly one-third of the funds appropriated by the General Assembly. Unless something is done, the unused money will be returned to the state General Fund at the end of the year."

Legislation has been introduced to remove the 75 percent limit on individual drought assistance payments. H.B. 2467, introduced by House Agriculture Committee chairman Rep. Ray Bunt, has been reported out of that committee. Likewise, S.B. 1417, introduced by Senate Agriculture Committee chairman Sen. William Slocum, has been approved by that committee. The bills would prorate the unused funds among eligible farmers, so that all \$60 million in state drought assistance is distributed.

Milk Marketing Board Conducting Hearing

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — On May 3, the Milk Marketing Board will conduct a public hearing for Milk Marketing Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony and exhibits concerning whether an adjustment should be made to the level of the current over-order premium (\$1.20 per hundred pounds of Class I milk) that is due to expire on June 30.

The board members stressed that this hearing will not affect

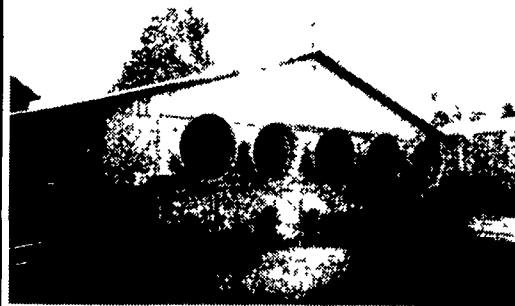
the \$.25 per 100 pounds of Class I milk that was added to the current over-order premium to help offset the increase in fuel costs.

The hearing will be held at 10 a.m., in Room 202 of the Agriculture Building, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg. If you plan to attend the hearing and would like to interview the board members, please contact Tracey Jackson prior to the hearing.

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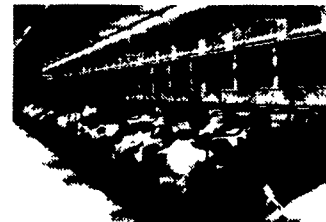
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