

*Dairy Trends In
Pennsylvania's Top
Producing Counties.
June Dairy Issue Special
BERKS*

Berks County Dairymen Are Optimistic

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Berks Co. Extension Agent

Today's dairy farm families have optimism for their futures. This optimism is grounded in the knowledge that change is part of the farming business. This change is based on the reality that to raise a family, operations must get bigger, lower their input costs, and/or secure income from other than dairying.

A "traditional" dairy no longer exists. Each operation is and must be unique as dairy producers find their niche of profitability. This has led to the existence of large, grazing, organic, replacement, non-crop, off-farm income, etc., dairy farms. The existence of non-traditional dairy farms is and will be the norm, not the

exception.

In the last few years, this change has been rapid and refreshing. Though the number of dairy farmers is decreasing, those left have a new spirit. We are seeing a change of the ownership and management to a younger generation of dairy producers who realize that managing an operation is more important than working longer hours.

In addition to making changes in their farms, dairy producers are joining with others in the agriculture industry to secure its future. Agriculture is a land-based industry. If there is not enough land, farmers, and raw goods, processing and distribution firms will not be able to exist in a geographic area.

This land preservation effort is essential for dairy farmers and the agriculture industry in each county, especially in the southeastern part of our state. The agriculture industry needs to determine how many acres of farmland are needed to keep an agribusiness system in a county, region, and in Pennsylvania.

An initial study, funded by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania and led by Dr. Tim Kelsey, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Penn State University, will attempt to answer that question in southeast Pennsylvania.

Two programs are critical in land preservation. First, if production is to continue in each township, the municipality must develop effective agriculture preservation zoning. Zoning limits the amount of non-agriculture activities, such as housing developments, in its agriculture areas. It also allows farm-related businesses to enhance the agricultural economy.

Lancaster County has led the way in this area. Berks County is now developing this type of zoning in our agriculture townships. In the past five years, six townships totalling almost 30,000 acres have been

placed into effective agriculture zoned areas. Berks County has over 80,000 acres in this type of zoning. In addition, five more townships are in various stages of developing their own effective agriculture preservation zoning.

Parallel with effective agriculture preservation zoning, purchasing agriculture conservation easements is essential. Zoning can be changed, but the purchase of easements has (at least in Berks County) been in perpetuity.

Berks County and Pennsylvania have made huge strides in this area, but additional

effort must be made. Since the program started, Berks County has saved over 126 farms and 15,325 acres in 18 different townships. The best news is that the Berks County Commissioners have secured a bond for over \$30 million for the purchase of agricultural easements program. Combined with state monies, over 25,000 acres will be preserved in this program the next five years.

Berks County has set a goal of preserving 200,000 acres of farmland to keep the agriculture industry thriving in our county.

Christian Farmers Set Annual Conference In Lancaster

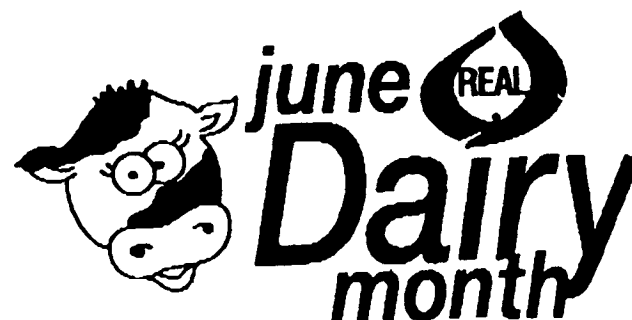
LANCASTER - The Fellowship of Christian Farmers will hold their seventh annual conference on August 4 to 6, 2000, at the Comfort Inn, Sherwood Knoll, Lancaster. This annual conference has been moved to the east as part of the FCFI Board's effort to serve all parts of the U.S. Extensive and early planning have gone into the conference to help insure its success.

The theme of the conference is "Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart" Col. 3:15-17. Worship and singing are part of the planned activities. In addition inspiring messages and small interaction groups to help get

acquainted are planned

The full conference cost is \$170.00 per adult, double occupancy. Lodging is free for children under 18, with meal cost per child of \$65.00. Part time attendance may also be purchased as follows: Friday and/or Saturday evening only with dinner--\$25.00, without dinner, free. Saturday full day with dinner--\$50.00, without dinner--\$20.00.

Reservation forms and conference fees may be forwarded to the FCFI office, Box 15, Lexington, IL 61753. Reservations must be received in the FCFI office on or before June 30, 2000.



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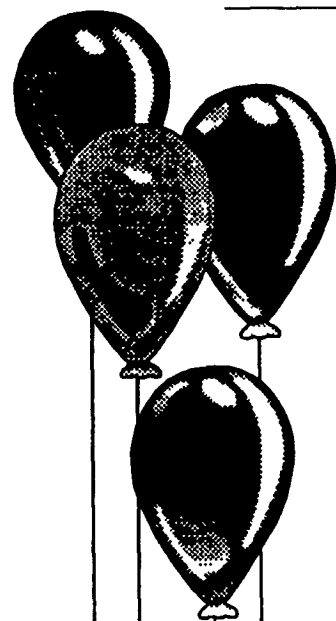
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White Oak Mills' Pinola Open House

DATE **Thursday, June 15, 2000** (rain or shine)
 TIME **10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**
 PLACE **White Oak Mills' Pinola Feed Store**
 (Site of White Oak's new bag warehouse)
 1588 Pinola Rd., Shippensburg, PA (Franklin Co.)
 RSVP (800) 468-5524 or (717) 532-7845 by Friday, June 9

Pig roast and ice cream will be served all day.

Event Activities Will Include:

- * "Summer heat stress" discussions throughout the day.
- * Cow station featuring body condition scoring demonstrations
- * TMR particle size display and testing
- * Silage inoculant applicator demonstrations
- * PQA certification (1:00 PM)
- * Bag feed specials, Industry representatives
- * Door prizes, Fellowship, and More.



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 Calumet 3750 Gal. Vacuum Tank w/Injectors, 23.1x26 Tires, RENTAL... **\$17,900**
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