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Lancaster Farming

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Grazing Lowers Capital Investment, Improves Herd Health

JAYNE SEBRIGHT
Lancaster Farming Staff

Editor's Note: This is the third article in a special June Dairy Month series on "Dairy Profit Possibilities."

HANOVER (York Co.) — Cow health and a low capital investment are the two reasons why Jeff Wolfe decided to graze his dairy herd.

"I have higher profit returns because I have lower feed costs," said Wolfe. "Last year my purchased feed costs averaged \$6.12

per hundredweight even with the drought."

Jeff and his wife Sandy milk 63 cows and raise about 50 head of replacements on 90 acres of pasture ground in Hanover. Their herd is a mix of Jerseys, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, and crossbred Holsteins.

"Holsteins are difficult to keep on pasture," said Wolfe. "You would have to supplement with a total mixed ration because a Holstein eats a lot and

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Jeff Wolfe of Hanover grazes 63 cows on 90 acres of pastureland. Freshening the herd in the spring, Wolfe keeps his cost down by purchasing little feed, renting the farm, and hiring custom work. Photo by Jayne Sebright

Facility Siting: Building Long-Term Relationships That Work

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff

MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) — Animal confinement housing siting involves more than selecting a space.

According to Al Wenger, "Siting has to include an obviously early and very thorough evaluation of the current land use, the neighbors, of the kind of people that are already there, the kind of farmer that was farming it before, the type of township it's in, the kind of regulations it already has, the way they treated other development, and the direction you can see that township is going as far as development."

Importantly, said Wenger of Wenger Feeds, Rheems, before moving any ground, "talk to nearby neighbors personally and early," he told about three dozen poultry producers and agri-industry representatives Monday afternoon.

Wenger spoke during the Penn State-sponsored Poultry

Management and Health Seminar at Kreider's Restaurant in Manheim.

Being "proactive" rather than "reactive" can save hassles — time, money, and the reputation of a business and an industry.

"You end up winning battle and losing wars," he said, if you blatantly ignore opposition and if you treat the "guardians," those landowners that will react intelligently to your plans, with indifference.

Location is a problem everywhere, Wenger noted. "Just up the street, they're looking to put a cemetery in, in Manheim Township," he said. "It's being objected to because it's too 'creepy.'"

"This isn't just us, it's everybody," Wenger said. That includes churches, parking lots, car washes, "you name it," he said. "And of course, confined animal feeding operations, imagine that."

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Practical Research Part Of PDA Budget

EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Editor

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) - A rehearsal of the accomplishments to date of the agricultural research projects funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture was part of the Agriculture Research Symposium held last week in the Capitol East Wing. Hosted by Samuel Hayes Jr., Pennsylvania ag secretary, the reports covered such subjects as dairy quality assurance, mastitis, agricultural odors, international markets, E.coli, salmonella, and aquaculture. "We need original research," Hayes said. "But of utmost importance is practical applied research that helps farmers do their job today. The common denominator is PDA with research that affects agriculture's profitability in a positive manner."

"We have a great domestic market place and we have the responsibility to feed, clothe, and shelter the people of America. But we also have products available on the international markets. And we must position ourselves in this global arena."

To do this, research is done in foreign countries with political, cultural, demographic and infrastructure analysis. One major benchmark of a good possible foreign market for Pennsylvania products relates to the consumption of electricity. In addition, the country is investigated not only for ability to pay but also the willingness to pay.

In other research projects, it was found that Pennsylvania

ranks very high in loss of milk production from high somatic cell counts. One study shows we lose \$73 per cow from this reduced milk production. This equates to \$1.3 billion lost profits in the industry. High SCC problems are the number one deterrent to profitability in our

country. The research projects are looking at antibacterial proteins produced from bovine immune cells to form a natural deterrent to high SCC. While eliminating many of the problem bacteria, there are no undesirable chemical residues. This

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Sunday is Father's Day, a day to celebrate with family and thank your dad for the impact he's had on your life. It's a reminder that fathering is a year-round responsibility, and one that Chet Hughes, Lancaster County extension agent, takes seriously. Turn to page B2 to read how Hughes and his children, Allison, 14, and Andy, 11, build strong bonds. Photo by Lou Ann Good



Noah, left, and Oliver, 3-year-old twins of Rob and Bonnie Wentworth, taste-test an orange milk punch with new Lancaster County Dairy Princess Elizabeth Young last Saturday at the Farm and Home Center. Turn to page B16 to read about the pageant. Photo by Andy Andrews