

Farmland National Beef Receives License To Develop New Food Safety Technology

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Farmland National Beef Packing Company recently announced it has licensed the commercial development rights for activated lactoferrin, a new food safety technology that protects consumers from harmful bacteria that may be found in meat.

The development rights were licensed from Dr. A.S. "Narian" Naidu, a medical microbiologist who directs the Center for Antimicrobial Research at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Naidu's invention involves an activated form of lactoferrin, a natural protein from cow's milk that is applied to meat surfaces during processing and packaging.

Laboratory results indicate the activated form of lactoferrin is effective against more than 30 different kinds of harmful bacteria, including E. coli 0157:H7, Salmonella, and Campylobacter.

"We continue to be impressed with Dr. Naidu's findings, and we intend to fully explore the merits of bringing this technology to the meat industry," said John R. Miller, chief executive officer of Farmland National Beef. "Bringing the safest meat products to market has always been critically important to us,

and this technology is the most appealing new development we've uncovered to date."

Miller said Farmland National Beef plans to conduct additional testing, assess how the technology can be used in beef processing plants, and pursue regulatory approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and USDA.

Assuming the continued testing produces positive results and the technology is granted the necessary regulatory approvals, Farmland National Beef plans to use activated lactoferrin in the production of its meat products and make the technology

available to the entire meat industry.

Farmland National Beef provided financial support and testing equipment for Dr. Naidu's activated lactoferrin research during the past two years as part of a corporate food safety initiative.

The company also announced that Eric B. Hale will spearhead the lactoferrin commercial development effort for Farmland National Beef. Hale has more than 20 years of experience developing scientific and medical technologies, including serving as chief executive of several early stage public life science companies.

Century Farm Applications Accepted

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Director John Schwartz has announced that applications for Lancaster County Century Farm nominations are being accepted by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

"To qualify as a Century Farm, the farm must have been owned by the same family for 100 consecutive years," said Schwartz. "A family member must currently live on the farm, and the farm must consist of at least 10 acres of the original holding, or gross over \$1,000 annually from the sale of farm

products."

Lancaster County currently has 132 registered Century Farms.

Century Farm information, applications, and assistance in filling out the application may be obtained from the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension, 1383 Arcadia Road, Room 1, Lancaster, PA 17601, or by calling 717-394-6851.

Schwartz said that Century Farm nominees whose applications are processed prior to Oct. 1 will be honored at the Lancaster County Farm-City Ag-Chamber Banquet Nov. 21.

Delmarva Corn, Soybean Conference Takes Hiatus

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — After observing its 20th anniversary in February, the Delmarva Corn and Soybean Technology Conference has been put on hold for 2001.

The conference was sponsored each year by cooperative extension at land-grant universities in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia and by agribusinesses serving the Delmarva area.

The hiatus decision was made at a special meeting of the planning committee on April 25. Committee members suggested that the conference's agricultural update focus for 2001 be transferred to county and regional extension educational meetings normally conducted each winter in the Delmarva area.

The committee will reconvene next March to determine the direction the conference should take in 2002.

Betsy Gallagher, planning committee chairperson, cited several reasons for the committee's action. Gallagher is a Maryland cooperative extension educator for agriculture and natural resources in Dorchester County.

Steadily declining trends in attendance were a major factor contributing to the cancellation, she noted. Even a shift last February to a three-location conference on successive days gave disappointing results in overall attendance.

One reason, no doubt, is a steady decline in the number of full-time farm operators and an increase in the number of part-time farmers. Part-timers often

have off-farm jobs that interfere with attendance at daytime farmer educational meetings.

In addition, buyouts and mergers on the agribusiness scene have greatly reduced the number of agribusiness representatives available to provide financial support and to exhibit at large regional meetings. E-commerce also is a limiting factor.

Overall, Gallagher commented, commercial crop farmers in the Delmarva area are bemoaning what appears to be another year of depressed grain prices and high operating costs — a situation that has prevailed for nearly a decade.

Adding to the economic stress is the prospect of unwelcome nutrient management and phosphorus regulations.

That environment seems to create a negative feeling toward traveling any distance to attend educational meetings. Attendance at local county cooperative extension meetings has not been adversely affected to the same extent.

But, while crop farmers throughout Maryland and Delaware continue to face economic stress, the depressed grain prices have helped Mid-Atlantic area dairy farmers contend with low milk prices.

Thus, planners for the Mid-Atlantic No-Till Conference, which observed its 25th anniversary in February, are going ahead with plans for another conference in 2001. This conference draws much of its attendance from dairy farmers in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

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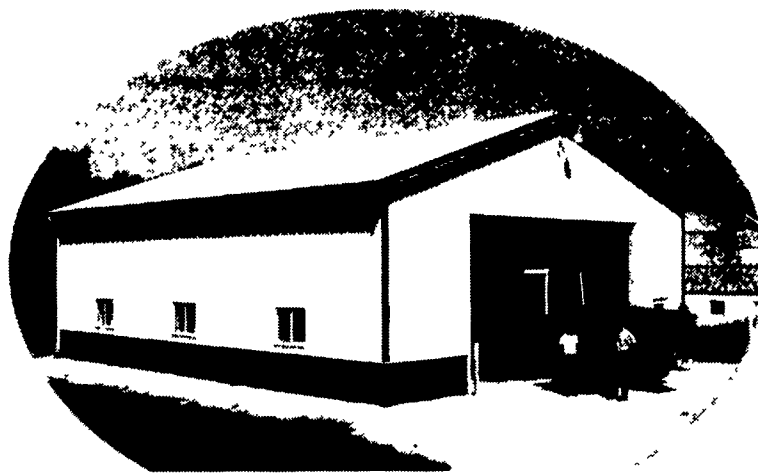
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