

Agriculture Makes Headlines In The New Millennium

(Continued from Page A1)

tional venture was named AgStar Technologies.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture allocated \$5.6 million to aid farmers in purchasing crop insurance. This money was in addition to the \$60 million Pennsylvania used for disaster relief from the 1999 drought.

Also during February, Governor Ridge proposed a budget which included \$135 million toward Pennsylvania's "Growing Greener" environmental effort.

Pennsylvania's Department of Agriculture (farmland preservation), Department of Environmental Protection (watershed protection and restoration), Department of Conservation of Natural Resources (grants to communities) and Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (water and sewer projects) received the money.

In the last days of February, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman announced the pork checkoff referendum in response to the call from Campaign for Family Farms.

March

Plum Pox hit the news again as Ag Secretary Samuel Hayes issued a treatment order requiring that infected orchards in Pennsylvania be destroyed by April 1, affecting 218 acres of trees.

April

The Pennsylvania Beef Council and Penn State University unveiled the "Blueprint for Success" program. The program provides cattle feeders with an education program meant to increase the beef value and improve profitability.

Meeting a deadline: more than 100 farms were preserved in 100 days before Earth Day. Since January, nearly \$23 million was invested to preserve the farms.

May

New York's legislative leaders reached an agreement on the state budget, "one of the best for agriculture," reported *Lancaster Farming*.

The budget represented a historic \$12 million reform of tax exemption programs for farmers, plus reductions in energy tax and restoration of various agricultural programs.

June

Pfizer Inc. and Warner-Lambert Co. completed one of the year's top mergers on June 19 for \$116 billion. The merger was one of the top 210 worldwide mergers.

The 2000 "Simply Delicious" marketing campaign was kicked off with a check to Pennsylvania fruit and vegetable growers for the billboards and point-of-purchase materials. The campaign, in its fourth year, has grown to include more than 900 stores and 500 growers.

July

Plum Pox was again in the news, this time for a sweeter reason: The USDA compensated Pennsylvania fruit growers with up to \$13.2 million for trees destroyed in an effort to control the disease.

In mid-July, Pennsylvania earned a certification from the USDA as having received bovine tuberculosis (TB) "accredited free state" status. This TB-free recognition came on the heels of a large scale effort in testing and meeting regulations.

The Dairy Forward Pricing Program officially began on July 19. The voluntary program allows dairy farmers and handlers to forward contract where they agree to terms by which the handler buys raw milk and the producer is paid.

August

Empire Farm Days, New York's largest agricultural showcase event, served as host to the New York State FFA and New York 4-H Tractor Operators contest for the first time, drawing 100 students from the state to compete in the contest.

Lebanon farmers received a symbolic check representing final payments under the Crop Loss Program and closing out the 1999 drought disaster relief program.

The Reading Fairground opened its doors on 60 acres of ground. Not only the acreage but much of the construction and money which covered additional costs was donated by the community.

Governor Ridge committed \$90 million capital investment in agriculture, a largest-ever state investment. The money is slated for a new exposition center and major renovations to the Farm Show Complex, a new research center at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, and a new livestock evaluation center at Penn State.

Visitors to Ag Progress Days at Rockspring enjoyed both clear weather and the optimistic outlook pervading the event, which officials called the largest in memory.

Returning the favor... Pennsylvania farmers were blessed with assistance from other states as a result of the 1999 drought, and producers had a chance to aid other producers with the "I Care A Ton" program. Pennsylvania producers contributed more than 1,200 tons of hay to Montana farmers and ranchers during the first week of the program following its announcement on Aug. 25. The hay went to Montana producers affected by forest and range forest earlier in the year.

September

One million pounds of waste pesticides were collected from all 67 Pennsylvania counties and 4,000 individuals who participated in the Chemsweep Program, making a significant contribution to water quality goals.

Somerset County Fair celebrated 100 years of fair seasons.

Melinda Wolfe, SUN area dairy princess, became Pennsylvania's dairy princess.

The All-American Dairy Show saw entries up 26 percent to 2,900 head, with 21 states represented. The aged cow grand champion of the Eastern National Holstein Show, owned by Tracy and Lindsey Weiker from Republic, Ohio, became supreme champion.

October

The value of cheese traded on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange dropped to the 1978 level on Oct. 10, at \$1.0550 per pound.

Nationally, Ag Secretary Dan Glickman signed a declaration of emergency, authorizing the transfer of \$44 million to expand the bovine tuberculosis eradica-

tion problem in the U.S.

November

A \$300 million program was announced which encourages expanded production of fuels made from corn, soybeans, and other crops. Ethanol, a "biofuel" almost nonexistent 20 years ago, now accounts for 1.2 percent of the nation's gasoline supply. More than 5 percent of U.S. corn production goes to biofuel use.

Pennsylvania received the "Pseudorabies-Free State" certification from the USDA for the swine industry.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture awarded matching funds of up to \$36,000 to the Pennsylvania Beef Council directed to the promotion of beef quality and safety in Pennsylvania through use of the Beef Quality Assurance guidelines and certification process.

December

The new farm equipment display will be featured at the 2001 Pennsylvania Farm Show, say officials. The display is sponsored by major farm equipment manufacturers and will be in the center of the main exhibit hall.

The USDA announces that it will begin accepting proposals to fund up to \$1 million in competitive market and promotion projects for the U.S. lamb industry.

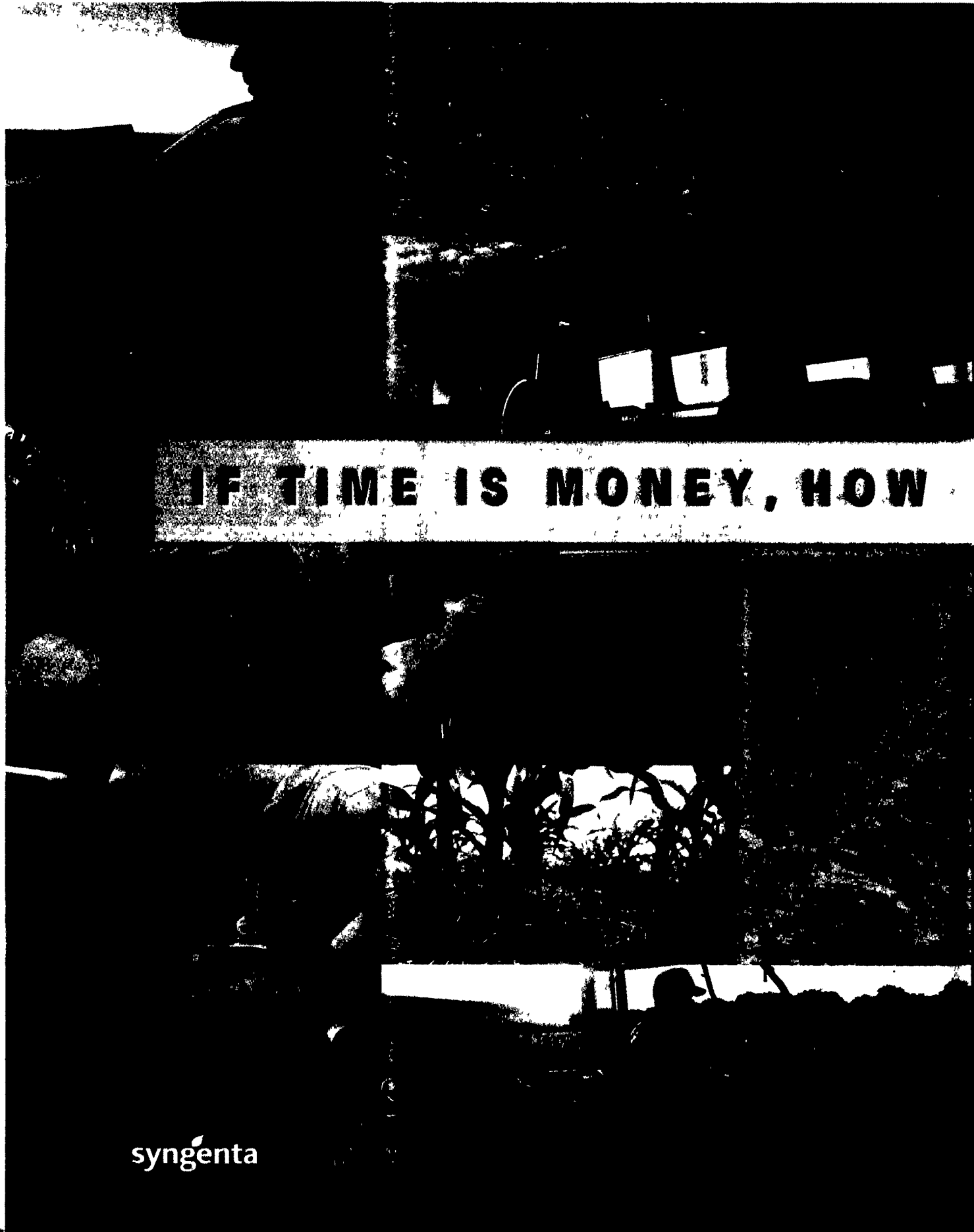
A new USDA rule put mandatory price reporting in place, making more market information available to the industry, available through USDA and NCBA Websites. Packers, processors, and importers that slaughter large amounts of swine and lambs and cattle must report price, volume, and terms of trade.

Ann M. Veneman, Sacramento, Calif., became the first woman to hold the office of national secretary of agriculture by president-elect George W. Bush.

Lancaster Farming Changes With The Times

Reflecting the change and growth this paper records, *Lancaster Farming* has added to its family of publications. The comprehensive 2001 agricultural directory covers an eight agriculture-intensive state area plus national contacts.

(Turn to Page A19)



syngenta