



Penn State Cooperative Extension Capitol Region Dairy Team

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

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Ask yourself, "Is it more profitable to prevent a disease or to treat it?" I think we all would agree that an ounce of prevention is worth the proverbial pound of cure. And that is precisely what "biosecurity" is all about — disease prevention.

Often when we think of biosecurity, we think of confined areas, disinfectant solutions, disposable clothing, and more. These all may have a part in biosecurity in some way, but is this what biosecurity has to be on your farm? Probably not. So how do you know what you should be doing? Let's do some planning.

To keep things simple, let us first look at what we want to protect. Of all the animals on a dairy farm, which groups or individuals are at greatest risk for disease? The answer is that the calves and fresh cows are probably most vulnerable. So this may be the place to start.

Next, consider what disease may be potential threats to these livestock groups. With calves this may be a viral disease such as BVD or IBR. Now I need to think of logical ways that I may prevent these diseases from infecting those calves. Good quality colostrum may be one way, and this would require a cow vaccination program to provide this colostrum. So vaccination is one part of a biosecurity program. And the calf needs to receive the proper amount of colostrum in the right time frame to be effective. For the Holstein calf, I recommend feeding two quarts of colostrum within two hours of birth and two more quarts within eight hours. Thus colostrum management is another part of biosecurity.

Another step in disease prevention may be aimed at limiting or preventing exposure to infections. This may involve exposure from animals, people, or vehicles coming onto the farm or from another animal group already on the farm. Again, consider carefully what disease agents may pose a risk to your farm or animal group and how it may be spread.

Using BVD as an example, BVD could be brought onto the farm by animals entering the herd or perhaps a show heifer returning to the farm from a show. A BVD outbreak can be prevented by making sure all stock are properly vaccinated, herd additions have been tested and found negative for BVD, and that all stock coming onto the farm are isolated from the herd for two to

three weeks. These same principles may apply to other disease agents as well.

Johne's disease and Salmonella infections are two bacterial diseases which are commonly spread through manure. But remember that Johnes is primarily infective to the young calf while Salmonella can infect both the susceptible calf and the cow.

Remember that the fresh cow is particularly susceptible because the stress of calving has depressed her immune system. So plan farm traffic to avoid tracking manure from other areas of the farm to the fresh-cow and calf area. And how about restricting outside traffic such as livestock haulers from these two critical areas? Plan a way that bull calves and cows to be culled can be picked up from a location outside the areas where the animals most susceptible to infections are housed.

Feed, feed equipment, and feed personnel may be another way to either bring disease onto a farm or to spread it about on a farm. Arrange to have feed supplies delivered to noncritical areas from where it may then be distributed. Be sure that sick animals, either cows or calves, are fed last and that feed or feed equipment does not go from the hospital area to the other parts of the farm. There may be benefit in placing a "boot-wash" in the area so that it can be used before leaving the hospital area. But these must be used and maintained properly. This subject will be addressed in a future column.

As you can now imagine, each farm may have its own biosecurity needs and challenges. But it all starts with three simple questions:

1. What are the part or parts of my farm that should be my biosecurity priority?
2. What disease or diseases should I be concerned about?
3. How are these diseases spread and how are they best controlled?

Milk Premiums, Pooling, Dairy Compact Under Spotlight In Pa.

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB) heard testimony Oct. 3 from dairy industry representatives asking that the over-order premium paid to Pennsylvania milk producers be increased to a total of \$1.65 per hundredweight.

The over-order premium is established by the PMMB in response to various weather and market conditions for Class I (beverage) milk. It is currently set at \$1.35 per hundredweight

above the price mandated by the federal government (federal order).

The board had voted in June to decrease the premium from \$1.65 to \$1.35 in response to testimony from some dairy representatives who had indicated improved conditions for dairy producers at that time.

At last week's hearing, Ed Gallagher of Dairy Marketing Services (DMS), along with representatives from Suiza Foods and the Pennsylvania State Grange, requested that the premium return to \$1.65 per hundredweight through December.

The PMMB scheduled an Oct. 12 meeting to vote on the issue. Results of the vote were released after *Lancaster Farming* went to press this week.

Meanwhile, the Pennsylvania House and Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committees are considering a new PMMB proposal on how over-order milk premiums are distributed among Pennsylvania dairy producers.

The over-order premium is paid only on Class I milk that is produced, processed, and sold in Pennsylvania. The amount of premium that any given Pa. dairy producer receives depends on the percentage of their dealer's milk sales within Pennsylvania that qualify as Class I.

Consequently, producers shipping milk to dealers who sell relatively low percentages of Class I milk to Pennsylvania markets will receive less of a premium on their milk than producers shipping to dealers with a higher percentage of Pennsylvania Class I sales.

In February of this year, the PMMB voted 2-1 to distribute or "pool" 45 percent of the over-order premium among all dairy producers in the state. The decision came in response to petitions made in 1998 by Land O' Lakes Inc., the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) and other groups.

The PFB and several dairy cooperatives, including Land O' Lakes, have petitioned for 90 to 100 percent pooling of the over-order premium, while other groups, including the Pa. Association of Milk Dealers, the Pa. State Grange, and other dairy cooperatives, have asked for zero pooling.

Legislative review is required before the new policy can be enacted by the PMMB, including review by the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committees.

Public comment on the pooling issue will close on Oct. 22. Comments can be sent to Sharon Grottola, chief counsel of the PMMB.

In related news, existing federal provisions for the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact as well as for creation of a new southern interstate compact have expired as of Sept. 30.

Among groups supporting dairy compact legislation is the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB).

In a Sept. 28 statement, PFB President Guy Donaldson urged Congress to either allow a vote to include dairy compact legislation in the Farm Bill currently under debate or provide stand-alone legislation.

Dr. John H. Schwartz Foundation Begins

ANDY ANDREWS
Editor

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — PennAg Industries has announced its intent to administer the Dr. John H. Schwartz Memorial Foundation, with funds generated to be awarded each year to local students pursuing an agricultural degree.

The Poultry Council of PennAg Industries, headed by Jim Shirk, has offered to administer the Foundation, it was announced Monday at the Poultry Management and Health Seminar at Kreider's Restaurant.

A board will meet annually to select the candidates. The Lancaster County Poultry Association and other industry associations will solicit donations from memberships and conduct the annual golf outing. The annual spring golf outing has already been renamed the John Schwartz Memorial Golf Outing.

For more information, or to send donations, contact Jim Shirk, PennAg Industries, 2215 Forest Hills Drive, Suite 39, Harrisburg, PA 17112, (717) 651-5920, ext. 225.

FBI Alerts Pesticide Dealers

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — At the request of the FBI, and in view of the current national situation involving recent terrorist attacks, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) is notifying all licensed pesticide dealers of the importance of reporting any suspicious sales, attempts to purchase, and/or use of pesticide products.

An important component of surveillance is identification of "sentinel events" (unrecognized warnings) that may precede a terrorist attack and could provide opportunities for prevention.

These events may include the attempted purchase of quantities of extremely toxic pesticides, generally classified as restricted use. Also, suspicious inquires regarding these products by the general public, or inquires or purchase of equipment, especially Ultra Low Volume (ULV) application

equipment by individuals who you feel have no legitimate use, should be reported.

Non-malicious misuse should continue be reported to the PDA. However, if there is suspicion of terrorist activity involving the sales and distribution of pesticides or equipment, contact the Philadelphia field office of the FBI immediately at (215) 418-4165.

The Pennsylvania State Police have also requested to be notified in case of an incident. The telephone number for the local State Police Field Installation is located on the first page of your telephone directory, or by calling directory assistance.

For information regarding this alert, contact Joe Uram, PDA Pesticide Enforcement Specialist, at (717) 772-5212.

Land O'Lakes Calls For 90 Percent Pooling Of PMMB Premium

CARLISLE (Cumberland Co.) — Land O'Lakes, Inc. is calling for a change in a regulation recently published by the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB).

If approved, the current regulation will pool 45 percent the Pennsylvania Over-Order Premium among all Pennsylvania dairy producers. On behalf of its membership, Land O'Lakes has asked the PMMB to revise the regulation to approve 90 percent pooling.

"We commend the PMMB for drafting a regulation to pool the premium. However, the only way to create a fairly-distributed premium system in Pennsylvania is to pool it at 90 percent," said

Gordon Hoover, Land O'Lakes corporate board member and a dairy farmer from Gap.

"Even at 45 percent pooling, one dairy farmer could be getting as much as \$3,500 more annually than another farmer in Pennsylvania. Both farmers produce the same quality milk under the same economic conditions. It's just not fair that the one would get that much more of a benefit than the other."

The premium was created to help all Pennsylvania dairy farmers when faced with economic and weather-related hardships. It is collected on all Class I or fluid milk produced, processed and sold in Pennsylvania. The information used to determine the level of premium is derived from

all farmers in the state, not just those in the PMMB handler pools.

However, the premium is paid back to the dairy farmers in the PMMB handler pools, regardless of whether or not the statewide data applies to their specific operations.

The over-order premium is funded by an 11.5-cent surcharge on every gallon of milk sold in Pennsylvania.

"Pooling the over-order premium at 90 percent would not affect the price the consumer pays at all," Hoover said. "I'm grateful that Pennsylvania's consumers are willing to aid farmers when there is a need. We should make sure that aid is equitably distributed among all farmers."

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