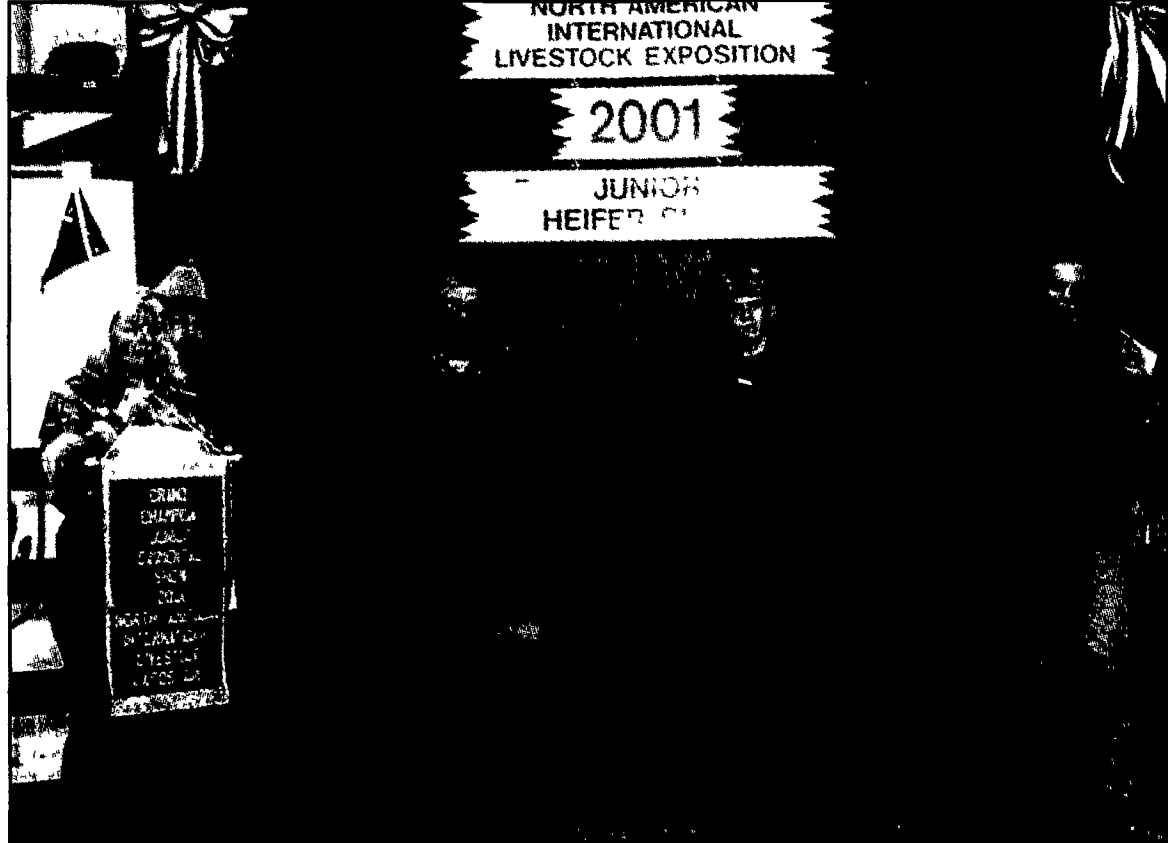


With Success, Young Pa. Simmental Breeders Go National



S&S Sahara was grand champion Simmental female at the West Virginia State Fair open show, Eastern National Livestock Show, Keystone International Livestock Expo, and, here, junior champion of the North American International Livestock Exposition. From left, Valerie Mankey, Judge Roundhouse, Ron Kelly, Cory Frazier, and, at the halter, Justin Mankey.

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff
AMITY (Washington Co.) and MYERSTOWN (Lebanon Co.) — During the last several years, the Simmental breed in this country has undergone significant changes, largely through intensive breeding practices conducted on a national scale.

Two young men from Pennsylvania who have positioned themselves on the front edge of those developments are Justin Mankey of Washington County and Tim Schaeffer of Lebanon County.

Mankey, 20, a student at Washington and Jefferson College, and Schaeffer, a senior at Eastern Lebanon County High School, both exhibited grand champion Simmental cattle at the Keystone International Livestock Exhibition (KILE) in Harrisburg this October. They also shared credit for the grand champion female in the junior show recently at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky.

S&S Sahara, a heifer bred by Schaeffer and owned by Mankey, took championship

honors at both shows. Schaeffer, who bought his first Simmental cows in 1995, said the breed produces a "more complete" beef animal.

"They might not be the prettiest things in the world," he said. "But when they mature into cows, they are so functional."

Schaeffer said that in recent years, the Simmental has been bred for increased weight gains over shorter periods of time, as well as for smaller frame sizes and solid color — usually black — for better commercial and show appeal.

Historically red and white, Simmental crossbreeding with Black Angus caused the shift to more solid black cattle. Downsizing the large Simmental frame was also necessary to make the breed more viable in the beef industry. Previously, the animals "were too big for commercial producers," according to Schaeffer.

Meanwhile, the cows have maintained an impressive level of high milk production inherited from full-blooded Simmentals, he said.

Both Schaeffer and Mankey use embryo transfer (ET) tech-
(Turn to Page A25)

USDA Rep: Organic Rules To Be Practical

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff
CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — USDA policymakers continue to develop a "meaningful standard" for organic agriculture across the country.

That was the message delivered by Mark Keating of the National Organic Program (NOP) to a group of farmers, proces-

sors, and certifying personnel gathered at the annual Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) meeting here Wednesday.

More than 100 people attended the daylong seminar.

While the control of specific materials used in growing and processing organic food will remain an important part of the certification process, Keating

said it is crucial that the final organic rule does not create "an unbearable compliance system," he said, but rather emphasize the whole process of organic agriculture.

"It's important that we maintain focus on practice standards," he said. "It has to be about the big picture. We can

(Turn to Page A30)

Md. Dairy Industry Encourages Progress

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff
WESTMINSTER, Md. — "Thriving in 2002 and Beyond" was the theme of the annual meeting of the Maryland

Dairy Industry Association (MDIA) conducted here Thursday.

Addressing top challenges facing dairy producers, professionals from the region spoke to

the group on topics such as practicing biosecurity measures, maximizing economic returns, improving reproductive success, and managing labor resources.

Richard Stup of Penn State spoke to the need for good workforce management on growing dairy operations, telling the group that none of the other aspects of herd management can succeed unless the people doing the work are well-managed.

"If you want to manage a dairy in the 21st century, you need to manage people," he said. "You've got to enjoy people as much as you enjoy cows."

Stup stressed the need for managers to create job descriptions for employees and standard operating procedures for daily jobs such as milking, heat detection, and feeding.

Workers need planned training sessions for each task, need to see the results of what they

(Turn to Page A28)

(Turn to Page A28)

Marketing, Distribution Discussed At Third Food, Farms Summit

MICHELLE KUNJAPPU
Lancaster Farming Staff
PHILADELPHIA —

"Spreading the Bounty and Safeguarding the Future" was the theme of the third annual Future of our Food and Farms Summit, conducted Thursday and Friday at Philadelphia Airport's Renaissance Hotel.

The theme highlighted the summit's focus of increasing good nutrition, reducing hunger, and supporting farming in the Mid-Atlantic region.

The Farmers' Market Trust and RISA (Regional Infrastructure for Sustaining Agriculture) hosted the event, which drew

180 food distributors, health officials, nutritionists, extension agents, government officials, and educators.

Information Presented

Thursday morning the "Hunger Congress," featuring Mid-Atlantic region legislators, provided an opportunity for participants to learn about pending legislation affecting hunger and allowed legislators to speak about their positions on the discussed issues.

The opening session, "Charting the Course for Mid-Atlantic Agriculture in the 21st Cen-



For the largest cookie exchange in Lancaster County, join Ruth Rogers, left, and Phyllis Wolf during the Ephrata Community Hospital Auxiliary Cookie Exchange, Dec. 6-7 from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. in the hospital lobby. More than 10,000 cookies are expected to be exchanged, sold, and given to New York firefighters. Photo by Lou Ann Good

Hospital Exchange A Real 'Cookie' Event Benefits Disaster Workers

LOU ANN GOOD
Food And Family Features Editor
EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — "Cookies are comfort food, and I love them," Ruth Rogers said of birthing the cookie exchange 15 years ago as a means

of benefiting the Ephrata Community Hospital.

Hundreds of other people share Rogers' passion for cookies and have helped make the annual event the largest cookie exchange in the county, accord-

(Turn to Page A30)