

# Dairy Days Under Way

## Agent: Don't Let Up On Biosecurity

DAVE LEFEVER

Lancaster Farming Staff

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Producers eager to keep up on the latest information have begun attending "Dairy Days" being offered in counties throughout the region.

Sponsored by the Penn State cooperative extension, the seminars cover diverse topics such as biosecurity, nutrition, environmental issues, and cow comfort.

Extension agent Clyde Myers hosted a Berks County Dairy Day attended by about 65 producers here this week.

Myers started the day by speaking on the continued and increasing importance of biosecurity on dairy farms.

Continued vigilance for foot and mouth disease, BSE, and the possibility of bioterrorism is crucial, Myers reminded the group. A strict biosecurity program will also help avoid the threat of more common diseases.

"Dairy farmers need to have an updated biosecurity plan," he said. "It needs to be written down and not just be in the farmer's mind."

All family members and workers involved in the operation need to understand and help enforce the biosecurity plan. At a minimum, all visitors to the farm must wear thoroughly disinfected rubber boots, Myers said.

People such as salesmen who travel from farm to farm need to carry rubber boots, a scrub brush, bucket, and disinfectant along with them. Clean clothes are also important, Myers pointed out.

The terrorist attacks of September 11 have also increased concerns about bioterrorism threats.

"Farmers need to be mindful of strangers in the area," he said.

Other topics at the Dairy Day focused on forage quality, with silage fermentation, silage additives, and TMR particle size in the spotlight.

Jud Heinrichs of Penn State shared findings on the effect of particle size in dairy rations, concluding that recent trends may have "gone too far" toward larger particle sizes.

At the same time, Heinrichs warned against chopping feed too finely and advised against chopping hay in the mixer along with the rest of the ration. As the hay is being chopped, other feed particles are also getting smaller he noted.

"Chopping (hay) in the mixer leaves a whole lot of room for error," he said.

A high proportion of tiny particles in the TMR will pass out of the rumen too quickly and create excess acid, he said.

Heinrichs demonstrated a

series of four screens that can be used to determine particle size distribution in TMRs.

According to Heinrichs, an incorrect older recommendation is that 10-15 percent of the TMR should consist of particle sizes greater than 1.5 inches. Recent studies point to a finer recommendation: 2-8 percent of the mix should be greater than ¾ inch. Particle size distribution in the mix should be less than previously believed.

"We want a narrow range (in particle size)" Heinrichs said.

Heinrich encouraged producers to closely monitor their rations.

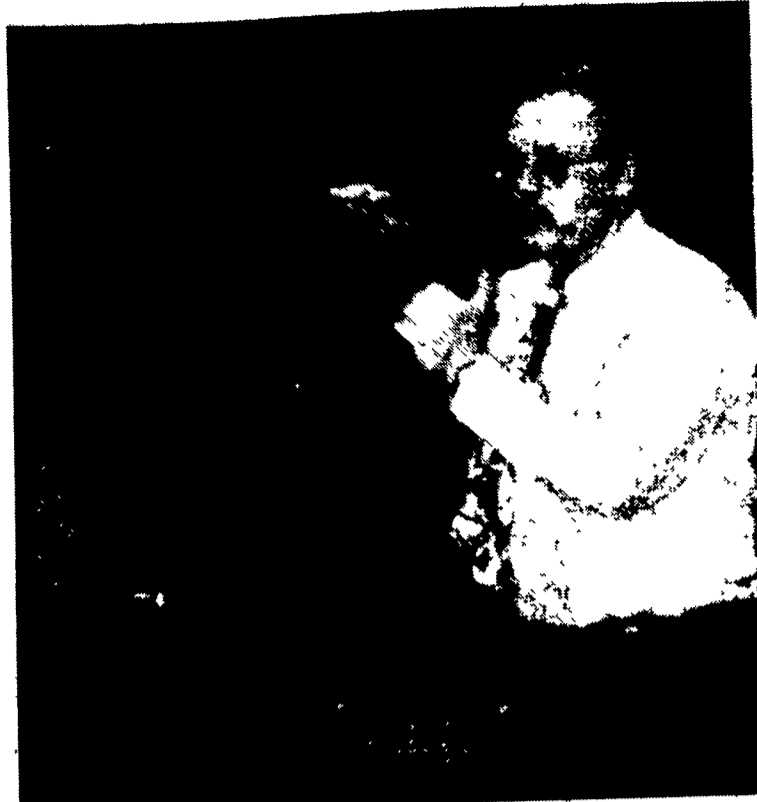
"The more often you check particle size and dry matter, the more you can fine tune your ration," he said.

A panel of dairy nutritionists handled a variety of questions from producers.

Carl Brown, Dave Casper, Frank Janicki, and Tim Kissling shared their views on feeding issues, as well as topics such as the problem of high culling rates, the future of dairy industry, and some key problem areas they observe on dairy operations.

Included in their concerns were insufficient moisture testing of feeds on farms, lack of feed consistency, lack of attention to transition cows, and water quality.

To find out when your local Dairy Day is scheduled, keep an eye on the *Lancaster Farming* calendar. Call your local extension office to learn more about dairy topics.



Jud Heinrichs shows part of a dairy feed ration after shaking it through a series of screens to determine particle size. According to Heinrichs, the trend toward larger particle size in recent years may have gone too far. "The more often you check particle size and dry matter, the more you can fine tune your ration," he said.



This panel of dairy nutritionists at the Berks County Dairy Day fielded questions on topics ranging from feed and water quality to the future of the dairy business. From left, Carl Brown, Frank Janicki, Dave Casper, and Tim Kissling.

## Nutrient Management Update

### At Franklin Co. Dairy Day

Feb. 28 Permit Deadline For Smaller CAFOs

DAVE LEFEVER

Lancaster Farming Staff

KAUFFMAN STATION (Franklin Co.) — Nutrient management concerns and the future of Pennsylvania and federal policy were the focus of a presentation given to a gathering of dairy producers here January 4.

"(Nutrient management) is a very rapidly changing area," said Charles Abdalla, Penn State department of agricultural economics and rural sociology.

Abdalla reminded producers that operations falling in the range of 301 to 1,000 animal equivalent units (AEUs) with more than 2 AEUs per acre of land suitable for spreading manure must apply for a permit by Feb. 28 through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

One AEU equals 1,000 pounds of live animal weight.

According to Abdalla, 187 mature cows (averaging 1,300 pounds,) 94 replacement animals, and 150 acres of land available for manure would add up to 310 AEUs and 2.1 AEUs per acre. Such an operation would be classified as a CAFO and required to apply for the permit.

CAFOs with more than 1,000 AEUs were previously required to apply for the permit by May 19 of last year.

Required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) through the DEP, the permit requires operators to comply with specific design and operating standards including a state-approved nutrient management plan, erosion and sediment control plan, best management practices, and self-inspection.

Abdalla also urged producers to find out in which watershed

their farm is located. Some watersheds are designated as "special protection" and require a more extensive, individual permit in addition to the general permit.

"Location matters," Abdalla said.

New and/or expanded CAFOs of more than 1,000 AEUs and operations with direct discharges to surface waters must have individual permits, regardless of their watershed location.

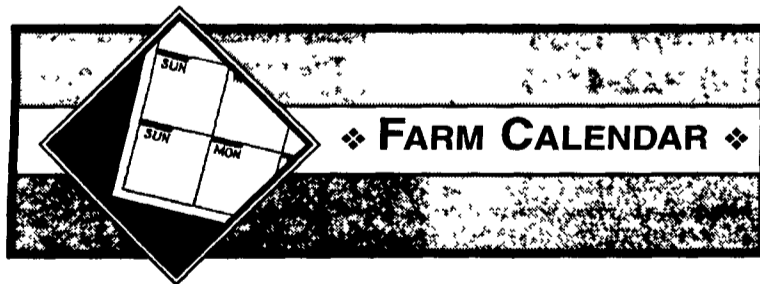
Abdalla outlined the three principle laws governing nu-

trient management in Pennsylvania: the Pa. Clean Stream Law, the Pa. Nutrient Management Act of 1993, and the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972.

He also took a look into the future of nutrient management policies, on both state and federal levels.

One proposed EPA rule of interest to Pennsylvania agriculture will be the inclusion of poultry under CAFO definitions, effective in December of this year.

Federal policy is also shifting



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Jan. 24, Montgomery County 4-H Center, Creamery.  
Animal Nutrition, Health and Profit, West Coast Salt Lake Hotel, Salt Lake City, Utah, also Jan. 23, (801) 521-7373.  
Virginia Farm Show, Augusta Expoland, Fishersville, Va., also Jan. 23, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Central Susquehanna Dairy Day, National Guard Armory, Lewisburg, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., (570) 988-3950.  
Franklin County Corn Clinic, Kauffman Community Center, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Hoof Care Seminar, Hartley, Del. and Hagerstown, Md., 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., (410) 778-1661 or (301) 791-1304.  
Annual Meeting of the Farm

and Home Foundation of Lancaster County, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 6:30 p.m., (717) 392-4911.  
Clarion, Venango Milk Quality and Mastitis Workshop, Foundry, Reynoldsville, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Passing on the Farm Workshop, Hugo's Restaurant, Washington County Extension, 9:30 a.m.-4:45 p.m.  
Warren County Extension Annual Meeting, Warren County Library, 7 p.m.  
Armstrong/Indiana Cattleman's meeting, Sandy Kaye's Restaurant, 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, January 23  
Southeast Pa. Crop Conference, Days Inn, Allentown, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.  
Virginia Pork Industry Confer-

towards a more phosphorus-based nutrient management system. In October, USDA's Natural Resource and Conservation Service will begin requiring phosphorus-based nutrient management plans for operations that accept government cost-sharing funds for nutrient management, according to Abdalla.

Meanwhile, the course of

Pennsylvania's Nutrient Management Act is under discussion, with changes in the works defining concentrated animal operations, phosphorus management, regulations on exported manure, and monitoring of nutrient management plans.

Changes in the Nutrient Management Act are scheduled to take effect in 2004.

ence, Airfield 4-H and Conference Center, Wakefield, Va.  
Maryland Crop Insurance Workshop, Kent, Cecil, Queen Anne counties, Howard Johnson's, Millington, Md., 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Nutrient Management Orientation, Pa. Dept. of Agriculture, Harrisburg, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., also Jan. 24, 9 a.m.-noon.  
Ohio State Extension USDA program, Hancock County Agricultural Services Center, Findlay, (419) 422-3851.  
PC Dart Training, Link to Learn Computer, Meadville, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Pa. Environmental Issues Conference, Room 140, Main Capitol Harrisburg, 8:30 a.m.  
Accepting Venison Donations, Gov. Mifflin Middle School parking lot, Shillington, 6:30-9 p.m., (610) 856-1124.  
Thursday, January 24  
ASI Convention, San Antonio, Texas.  
Crops Day, Montgomery County 4-H Center, Creamery.  
Farmer Production Workshop, Comfort Inn, Lewisburg, 10

a.m.-3 p.m. Also Jan. 29 and 30 and Feb. 5 and 7.  
South Central Holstein Show and Sale meeting, 10:30 a.m.  
Allentown Fair Aug. 27-Sept. 2 Kickoff Special Celebration, William T. Harris Agricultural Hall at the Fairgrounds.  
Tri-County Vegetable and Small Fruit meeting, Penn Township Community Building, Shippensburg, (717) 263-9226.  
Cumberland County Crops Day, Penn Township Fire Hall, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Central Susquehanna Valley Vegetable Meeting, Carriage Corner, Mifflinburg, (570) 837-4252.  
Penn-Jersey Pasture School, evening, Phillipsburg, N.J., (610) 746-1970.  
Clarion/Venango Quickbooks Training, Clarion County Park, Shippensburg, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
Biosecurity Training, Lady of Lourdes Church, Cochran-town, 1 p.m.  
Friday, January 25  
Friends of Agriculture Breakfast, University of Delaware,

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