

Lancaster County Holstein Club Visits High-Type Herds

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff

RICHLAND (Lebanon Co.) — About 20 Holstein breeders from Lancaster County took a trip to several top herds in southeast Lebanon and northeast Lancaster counties March 7.

"We wanted (the group) to see high-type cows," said Mark Welk, coordinator of the tour for the Lancaster County Holstein Club.

First stop was the 58-cow milking herd of Adam and Lisa Sonnen in Lebanon County.

Married in 1994, the Sonnens have been building on the breeding program first started by Adam's grandmother, Ruth Sonnen, in the 1940s and continued by his father, Malcom Sonnen, in the 1970s.

Adam said he began to get involved in the breeding program as an early teenager and went on to become an A.I. technician.

Sound, long-lasting cows with high type are a priority at the Sonnens.

"We believe in longevity, not maximum production," Lisa said.

Two-year-old milking animals are not expected to break any production records on the Sonnen farm, according to Lisa. However, they must have the traits of a cow who will produce over the long haul.

One example of that philosophy is "Adora," a Sonnen cow that produced 14,000 pounds of milk as a 2-year old and went on to make 41,000 pounds in a later lactation.

The Sonnens favor Canadian genetics, with about 50 percent of the herd traceable to Browndale

sires. Other influential bulls include Astrojet and Hanoverhill Jethro. Semen is kept on the farm.

Eight of the Sonnen cows are classified Excellent and a number of them Very Good.

About 150 Holsteins, including replacements, are kept on the farm. Last year, about 25 females were sold for breeding.

The herd of Kirby and Sheryl Horst, Newmanstown, was next on the tour.

Using sires from both the U.S. and Canada, the Horsts have de-

veloped a herd that boasts the 2001 Lebanon County high breed age average (BAA) rating at 110.7.

Visiting Cocalico Holsteins, home to the 50-cow herd of Paul Zimmerman, Ephrata, was a fitting climax for the tour.

With 30 excellent cows and a BAA of 112.2 — highest in the state — Zimmerman's herd topped off what Welk called a successful day.

"Everyone had a great time," he said.

Stokes Takes Helm At National Cattlemen's

DENVER, Colo. — Terry L. Stokes has been named Chief Executive Officer of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) effective immediately. Stokes, 47, is currently the organization's executive vice president and chief financial officer, and has served as interim CEO since the departure of Chuck Schroeder last month.

According to NCBA President Wythe Willey, the organization will not miss a step with Stokes at the helm. "I've had the opportunity to work with Terry and he is an extremely capable, talented and motivated individual," Willey said. "I am confident he will provide valuable leadership to our organization." Willey said Stokes will oversee the NCBA staff and help manage the day-to-day operations of the leading organization representing America's cattle farmers and ranchers.

John Lacey, chairman of the search committee and a beef producer from California, said the search was done quickly, but

carefully and thoroughly. "We received about 40 applications for the position, and each of our committee members reviewed each resume," Lacey said. "The seven finalists we eventually brought in for interviews were each exceptional, but in the end

we recommended Terry as the most qualified for the position."

"I'm honored and humbled to be given this opportunity," Stokes said. "The beef industry has been a key part of my life — and part of the lives of my entire family — for more than half a

century."

Stokes joined NCBA as chief financial officer in 1996, and added the assignment of executive vice president in 1999. Before joining NCBA he was the Executive Vice President and CFO for the Texas Beef Council, where he had worked for three years.

A native Texan, Stokes' career spans all segments of the cattle and beef industry, including cow/calf, feeding and packing. He currently partners with his brother-in-law in a small stocker operation in Southern Texas.

A graduate of Angelo State University with a degree in animal agriculture, Stokes also has an MBA with emphasis in operations management and managerial accounting from the University of Texas - Austin. He and his wife, Beverley, reside in Denver. They have two children, Whitney, 19, a freshman at Oklahoma Baptist University, and Ryan, 16, a high school sophomore.

Shepherds' Auction May 11

MERCER (Mercer Co.) — All types of sheep-related items will be sold at a Shepherds' Auction Saturday, May 11 at 5 p.m.

The auction, sponsored by the Northwestern Pennsylvania Sheep And Wool Growers Association in conjunction with the Western Pennsylvania Sheep And Lamb Sale, is scheduled at the Mercer County 4-H Park, located on Rt. 19, Mercer.

If you are looking to buy or sell sheep-related items, we invite you to join us.

Entries will be taken sale day from 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Pre-entered items will be advertised and

should be sent to Elaine Burkholder, 17419 Round Top Rd., Meadville, PA 16335, or e-mail to: burkholder@alltel.net. Items should include your name and a brief description of the items you wish to sell. Deadline is March 31.

A 10 percent commission fee will be charged on all items. All items will sell, no reserve pricing. The sale committee reserves the right to refuse any entry.

Proceeds benefit the Northwestern Pennsylvania Lamb And Wool Growers Association.

Guide Available About Impact On U. S. Of Non-Native Pests

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) recently released a scientific paper that provides policymakers and others with a nine-step guide to curtail the impact of non-native pests, including diseases, insects, and animals.

CAST is also introducing a new Web-based directory of visuals to assist in the identification of these pests that are the source of an estimated \$137 billion annual economic burden to the U.S. and are the second leading cause of species endangerment.

The complete paper and the resource listing of invasive species visuals are available at <http://www.cast-science.org/> along with CAST's many other scientific works.

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