

Annual Egg Production Up 5 Percent From Previous Year

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Annual egg production in Pennsylvania for the year ending Nov. 30, 2001 was 6.61 billion eggs, five percent more than the 6.31 billion produced in 2000, according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service (PASS).

There was an average of 24.4 million layers in Pennsylvania laying flocks during the 12-month period, five percent more than the 23.3 million the previous year. Average annual production per layer was 271 eggs, unchanged from the previous year.

All chicken inventory (exclud-

ing commercial broilers) as of Dec. 1, 2001 totaled 29.3 million, down four percent from the 30.6 million one year earlier. Pennsylvania ranked fourth in chicken inventory on Dec. 1, 2001. Pennsylvania ranked fourth in layers on hand December 1.

Only Iowa, with 34.6 million, Ohio, with 30.3 million, and California, with 23.8 million, were the only states outranking Pennsylvania in layers.

Commonwealth flocks included 23.7 million layers 20 weeks old and older, down two percent from last year; 5.6 million pullets less than 20 weeks old, down 12 percent; and 78,000

other chickens, down eight percent from the inventory on Dec. 1, 2000.

The average value per bird on hand Dec. 1, 2001 was \$1.60. Total value of all flocks in Pennsylvania on Dec. 1, 2001 was estimated at 46.9 million dollars, down four percent from the 49.0 million dollars in 2000.

Nationally, egg production during the year ending Nov. 30, 2001 totaled a record high 85.6 billion eggs, up one percent from the previous year. Layer numbers averaged 335 million, up two percent from 2000. The annual average production per layer on hand in 2000 was 256 eggs, down slightly from the 2000 average of 257.

The inventory of all chickens in the U.S. (excluding commercial broilers) totaled 441 million on Dec. 1, 2001, up one percent from last year. Hens and pullets of laying age plus pullets over 13 weeks old but not of laying age on hand totaled 381 million, up three percent from Dec. 1, 2000.

The average value of chickens in the nation's flocks on Dec. 1 was \$2.42, down two cents from 2000. Total value of the nation's flocks was estimated at 1.07 billion dollars, up one percent from a year ago.

Hereford Breeders Anticipate Summer Conference

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The American Hereford Association (AHA) members and the Oklahoma State University (OSU) animal and meat sciences departments are gearing up for the 2002 Breed Directions Summit, June 20-22 in Stillwater, Okla.

Hereford breeders from around the globe and beef industry experts will convene at the Payne County Expo Center and OSU for three days filled with speakers and entertainment.

Glen Dolezal, Excel Corporation, and John Tucker, North Platte Feeders, will use live cattle for attendees to gain knowledge on determining value characteristics in Herefords and to discuss the type of cattle being selected for the feedlot. In addition, Dr. Tom Field, Colorado State University and Dr. Dan Moser, Kansas State University, will address past and present Hereford breed trends, while focusing on the progress made and areas seeking improvement for the breed to maintain its status in the industry.

Craig Huffhines, AHA executive vice-president, says the timing of a conference of this caliber is perfect as the demand curve is changing. The Breed Direction Summit will launch the Hereford breed into a higher level of excellence in performance and will

also motivate the breeders to enhance their operations and become full service genetic suppliers.

A session led by Dr. Brad Morgan, OSU, will be devoted to carcass value, product enhancement and new beef marketing specifications. Participants will also have the opportunity to partake in sessions directed at understanding EPDs and AHAs new whole herd Total Performance Records (TPR) program more clearly.

Wrapping up the conference, seedstock and commercial panels will discuss the responsibilities of a seedstock breeder and what is expected of them from the commercial industry. In conjunction with the commercial panel, a live evaluation of individual cattle will take place, demonstrating what the commercial sector is demanding from Hereford seedstock producers.

Lee Pitts, renowned western columnist and speaker will highlight the evening festivities on June 20.

Participant cost is \$100 and spouse registration is \$50 including four meals. For more information or to register, contact the AHA or log on to www.hereford-d.org.

Lowes Launches CHB Campaign

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Lowes Foods, Winston-Salem, N.C., has teamed up with Certified Hereford Beef LLC (CHB) to undertake the largest retail marketing campaign in the history of Hereford beef.

The launch includes print advertisements, complete in-store signage and the Beef Made Easy labeling program. Lowes is the first CHB account in the state and has 86 participating supermarkets.

"Thanks to Lowes, the demand for program eligible Hereford and baldy steers has increased by 1,000 head per week," said Rob Ames, AHA director of product marketing.

CHB will be a full-case branded beef program for Lowes, replacing its commodity Choice beef offering and packer brand Angus beef program sold in some service-case stores.

N.Y. Legislation To Propose Ag Venture Capital Program

ALBANY, N.Y. — Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee (D-Nelson) is planning to introduce a bill to create the AgriDevelopment Venture Capital Program which would allow the State Comptroller to invest public retirement funds in new and existing agribusinesses.

"The agriculture industry, just like the high tech sector, is in need of the investment capital that this Program would provide," Magee said. "There is no doubt that with an infusion of equity farms, farmers and agribusinesses across the state will begin to grow in profitability and numbers."

The AgriDevelopment Venture Capital Program is patterned after a similar program enacted in 1999 which allowed the Comptroller to invest the assets of the Common Retirement Fund in privately owned businesses but is not specific to the unique needs of agriculture and perhaps has the tendency to focus more on telecommunications and high tech companies.

"Too often, agriculture is not looked at as a means to improve the state's economy, but the fact is that when you talk about the

Upstate economy you have to talk about agriculture," Magee commented. "The creation of an AgriDevelopment Venture Capital Program clearly shines the light on the need for equity investments in farming and agriculture."

Initially, the bill would allow the Comptroller to invest up to \$25 million in assets of the state's over \$100 billion Common Retirement Fund to be matched equitably by private dollars creating an investment infusion of up to \$50 million into the agriculture industry of New York State.

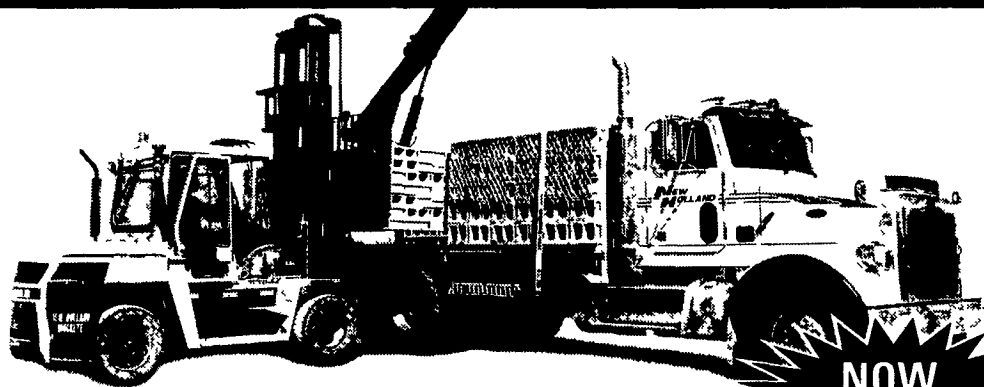
Among his other goals this session, Magee is pushing an agriculture agenda that provides a whole package of services for farmers, food processors, agri-marketing associations and consumers. This includes the creation of the state's first AgriDevelopment Zones; a new focus on agricultural education in schools that would entice young people to enter farming as a career; as well as the continued push on marketing "locally grown, locally known" New York agricultural products.



Jean and Robert Berkheimer, were honored as one of the oldest dairy couples still farming in Cumberland County. Also shown is LeAnn Witmer, Newburg, and Brandon Weary, president of the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Association. The cooperative extension recently conducted their annual meeting at Penn Township Firehall where the presentation took place. The Berkheimers have operated a dairy farm with their son since 1970 and are currently milking over 160 cows in Monroe Township.

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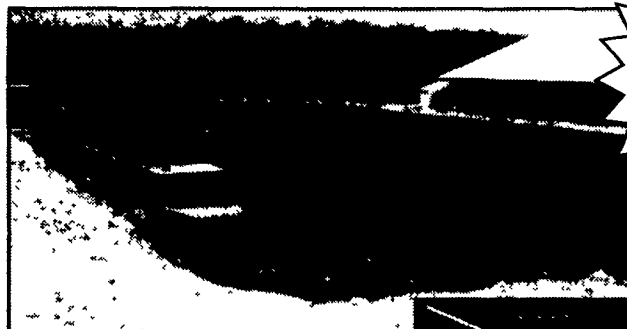
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