

**Ida's
Notebook**
by
Ida Risser



My houseplants keep me busy during the winter as there are about 100 of them. Most of them are in two bay windows but a few big plants sit on the floor. They need to be watered regularly and spent blossoms picked up off the windowsills.

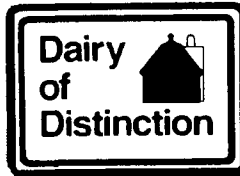
Due to my husband's illness, some extra plants have been given to him. As spring approaches, I'm concerned about garden work. It is work that I enjoy, but it is so much nicer to have a helper. Doing the rototilling has always been man's work and also putting up fences for peas. Only time will tell how things are done this year.

After my mother broke her ankle she declared that she could not learn to use crutches. So, she sat in a wheelchair for weeks. Finally, my father was tired of cooking and serving her. So he told her she must get up and move around. Even come to the kitchen for meals. Thus, he got her up and moving again, and she walked for another 10 years. Necessity makes us do things that we think we cannot do.

I've had one major operation in my life and after a week in the hospital, I came home and got to work. When I saw all those weeds in my garden, I felt they had to be hoed. Everyone else was too busy to do it and so I did it — though it was real misery. Even today I believe it was best that I had to plunge right back to work.

Although we are housebound this winter, I'm finding lots of things to do. The braided rug is almost finished, my seeds are ordered, I bake a dessert several times a week, and naturally water all those houseplants every few days.

Wanted: Well-Kept Farms For Dairy of Distinction Merit



UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Pennsylvania dairy farms are invited to apply for this year's Dairy of Distinction Award from the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program. Applications must be submitted by April 15.

The award is based on the idea that attractive farmsteads enhance consumer confidence in the wholesomeness of milk and stimulate milk sales and public support for the industry. Dairies receiving the highest scores in each of 10 Pennsylvania districts will be awarded an 18- by 24-inch Dairy of Distinction sign to display in front of their farm.

"This program is run by volunteers and recognizes the hard work and dedication of dairy producers who promote a positive image for the dairy industry," said Mike O'Connor, secretary of the Pennsylvania Dairy of Distinction program and professor of dairy science extension in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Roadside judging will take place in May. Judges will look at factors that can be controlled by the farmer, such as clean and attractively finished buildings; neat landscaping, ditches, roads, and lanes; and well-maintained fences. They also will take into



Crystal Spring Farm, Mifflintown

account other aspects of the farm, such as cleanliness of animals, the barnyard, feed areas, and manure management.

Winning farms will be notified in late June. Because this is a yearly award, previous winners are reevaluated each year to see if they are still maintaining excellent standards.

To receive an application, call Mike O'Connor at (814) 863-3913 or e-mail

him at MCOConnor@das.psu.edu

Since 1987, Pennsylvania's Dairy of Distinction Program has recognized more than 750 dairy farms. The Pennsylvania program is part of the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program, which also includes New York, New Jersey, and Vermont. Dairies in these states can contact the program secretary in their state for applications.

**Dairy of Distinction
2002 Pennsylvania Application**

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

Attractive dairy farms give the consumer greater confidence in the wholesomeness of milk and stimulate milk sales which encourages public support for the dairy industry. The award gives recognition to the dairy farmer for maintaining a well-kept farmstead.

ELIGIBILITY

All Northeast dairy farms producing milk for sale are invited to submit an application for the award. Dairies receiving the 10 highest scores in each of the 21 districts will receive an 18"x24" Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed in front of their farm.

APPLICATION

Your Name _____ Farm Name _____
Mailing Address _____
Phone Number _____
Cooperative or Handler (where you ship your milk, be specific) _____

(Your Handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality)
Location (driving directions for judging team) _____

County (where your farm is located) _____

I hereby apply to the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee to have my dairy scored in accordance with the rules of the program for the purpose of obtaining a Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed on my premises. (No producer will be charged for scoring or sign expense.)

_____ Date _____

Signature Owner/Operator _____

Return application by April 15 to
Pennsylvania: Michael O'Connor
Department of Dairy and Animal Science
324 Henning Building
Penn State University
University Park, PA 16802

✓ NEW YORK - Carol Keene-Ainslie, 3993 Jordonville Road, Jordonville, NY 13361

✓ NEW JERSEY - Joy Ricker, 91 Beemer Road, Sussex, NJ 07461

✓ VERMONT - Elisa Clancy, Vermont Department of Agriculture, 16 State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

How Is Your Farm Scored?

Awards will be based upon neatness, good maintenance, and other factors, which can be controlled by the farmer. Attractive background scenery should not be weighed heavily in judging. All judging observations should be made from a vehicle at one or more points on an adjacent public highway (or if farm is off the road, the nearest lane). Judging should give equal consideration to old wood construction and new construction of metal or concrete block.

The award program may be used for subsequent advertising or promotion activities for dairy producers or dairy farming. Farmers who apply for awards agree that, if selected, they will cooperate with these activities and make all reasonable efforts to maintain both the exterior and interior of their properties in an acceptable condition.

How The Judging Works

Judging teams will visit farms during the month of May. Farms will be judged each year as the award is presented on an annual basis. Any dairy failing to maintain appearance standards will be asked to remove their sign. The Dairy of Distinction signs remain the property of the committee, not the property of the dairy farmer. All farms must achieve a compliance score of 90 percent of their Dairy of Distinction score card. Your cooperative or milk handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality.

Rules

- The Dairy of Distinction sign remains the property of the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program Committee (NEDFBP).
- The post and bracket shall be supplied by and maintained by the dairy farmer. NEDFBP suggests that a wood post 4"x4"x12' or iron pipe 2"x12' be used. Posts or pipe should be installed and maintained in true vertical position with 8' above ground. Top of the bracket should be lower than six inches from the top of the post. In addition, NEDFBP suggests that the sign be mounted in a frame to provide additional stability.
- The sign shall be displayed in front of the dairy at roadside. An attractive post and bracket or other frame shall be used to display the sign. No more than three signs should be displayed from the sign frame or post, and all shall be of a style, general size and quality comparable to the Dairy of Distinction sign. The sign should be secured on all sides to avoid wind damage.
- Signs shall not be moved to other premises. New owners of a Dairy of Distinction farm must apply to retain the sign.
- Replacement of damaged signs shall be at the discretion of the committee.
- No producer shall be charged with scoring or sign expenses.
- The judges' decision will be final.
- Judging will take place between May 1 and May 31.
- Farms awarded a Dairy of Distinction sign in previous years will be judged between April 1 and April 30. If they do not qualify, they will be rejudged between May 1 and May 31 so they have the opportunity to keep the sign.
- Farms that do not requalify will return the sign to their regional Dairy of Distinction Committee.

**Dairy Checkoff
Successes At
Pa. Farm Show**

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Dairy promotion was stronger than ever at the 2002 Pennsylvania Farm Show. Throughout the show, dairy's message was spread to consumers through an interactive exhibit, displays and contests. Dairy events were made possible by the farmer-funded dairy checkoff organizations, Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program, American Dairy Association & Dairy Council Mid East and the Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association, working together.

The farmer-funded dairy checkoff program's booth in the main exhibit area featured the dairy trivia game, "Who Wants to be a Moo-lionaire?" Visitors learned about dairy and nutrition while playing the entertaining game, based on the TV game show. Along with "Moo-lionaire," another interactive nutrition game taught consumers about eating a well-balanced diet, including milk and dairy foods. Dairy-friendly recipes and tattoos were also provided to the public.

Dairy checkoff also sponsored several other events at the Farm Show. The annual butter sculpture paid tribute to American heroes, featuring a firefighter and a policeman passing an American flag to a military officer. In the "Simply American: Cheese Carving Contest," first place went to Kathy Griffith of Lancaster County for her sculpture of a bald eagle, the Liberty Bell and the Scales of Justice on a five-pound block of Cheddar. An exhibit featuring cow's milk cheeses produced in the Commonwealth was on display in the center of the food court. Additionally, many Farm Show visitors stopped at the milk mustache photo booth to pose for their very own milk mustache photo.

The dairy promotion groups also invited farmers to visit the exhibit to learn about their dairy checkoff investment. Winners of the drawing for a "got milk?" jacket were Robert Hoover of Indiana County and Teresa Pomraning of York County.

**4-H
HAPPENINGS**



York County 4-H Berries and Bees Club is seeking new members. Whether they live in city, suburbs or rural areas of the county, all youths ages 8-18 years are invited to learn how to raise small fruits, honey and flowers. Current members pictures above are, back row, from left, Lydia Eddinger, Amanda Hoover, Rachel Schreck, Matt Hoover, Brian Snyder. Front row, from left, Brittney Shoemaker, Randy Shoemaker, Heather Weaver, and Sarah Leib.