

Penn State Cooperative Extension Capitol Region Dairy Team

PRODUCING HIGH-QUALITY MILK

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Good quality raw milk is essential for the production of dairy products acceptable to the consumer. The key to their acceptance is the delivery of consistent high-quality products having good flavor, odor, and texture at the time of consumption.

What are some of the general reasons for high counts?

Most high raw milk counts involve improper cleaning and sanitizing of dairy equipment, poor production practices, inadequate cooling, or mastitis problems.

All milk handling equipment must be properly cleaned after use and sanitized before reuse. A cleaning program based on water conditions should be set up and followed. You should seek advice from your dairy sanitarian or technical representative of the cleaning and sanitizing materials supplier.

Cooling should be adequate to decrease temperature at the first milking to 40 degrees Fahrenheit (F) within one hour of milking. Blend temperatures should remain below 45 degrees F on subsequent milkings. Milk must be held between 36 degrees F to 40 degrees F at all times in the bulk tank to maintain the highest quality.

Recording thermometers are a useful tool to monitor milk cooling and cleaning practices. They are also a valuable tool as a warning system. The recording thermometer can be wired to indicate improper cooling or to trigger a warning device that the tank is not functioning properly. If the loss of one or more tanks of milk can be avoided, the cost of the system is recovered. Portable thermometers should be available



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for you to check the accuracy of the bulk tank thermometer from time to time.

When trying to determine the cause of high bacteria counts, one should look at all phases of his or her dairy operation. Do not assume that the same practices are followed by everyone on your farm. Be thorough and check all possibilities even after you think you found the causes for a high bacteria count.

In summary, consider all areas of animal preparation, milk practices, and cleaning and sanitizing of equipment. For persistent problems, have your dairy inspector or equipment representative do a milking time inspection to observe your procedures and practices.

Remember, your dairy inspector or equipment representative doesn't like troubleshooting high counts anymore than you like receiving them on your milk company bacteria card. All milk companies would much rather pay you a premium for producing high-quality milk than troubleshooting high counts. Once milk is contaminated with bacteria or drugs, it can never be made pure and wholesome again.

Virginia Farm Business Transition Meeting Scheduled

WYTHEVILLE, Va. — The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (VDACS) Agricultural Vitality Program will conduct its next regional farm business transition meeting on April 9 at the Ramada Inn in Wytheville, Virginia.

The meeting will be 5:30-9:00 p.m. Dinner is included.

The purpose of the session is to discuss basic issues related to farm business transition: estate planning, farm business planning, financing and capitalization, mediation and negotiation, and farmland preservation.

The department has sponsored general seminars and conferences on a statewide basis and is now moving to a regional format to allow for greater participation among Virginia farmers in specific areas of the state.

In addition to VDACS' staff, program participants will include Jesse Richardson, Assistant Professor in Urban Affairs and Planning at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Mr. Richardson is an attorney who has both private and public sector estate planning experience. The program will also feature a discussion on transition issues by several farmers experienced in the farm business transition process.

Space will be limited so farmers planning to attend are asked to call 804/225-2996 or email mseay@vdacs.state.va.us by Tuesday, April 2, to register. Sponsors will collect a \$15 per person registration fee at the event to cover the cost of speakers, materials, and dinner.

Interested In Improving Profits From Your Dairy Farm?

SUNBURY (Northumberland Co.) — There are many dairies throughout the U.S. Numbers are declining at a fairly rapid rate.

The good news is that "progressive" producers, regardless of size, will survive.

If you want to be a survivor in the dairy industry, your farm must generate "sufficient" profit. In some cases dairy producers expand their farms. There are, however, many other strategies to generate "sufficient" profit without expanding your dairy.

Penn State Cooperative Extension in the Susquehanna Valley, along with Monsanto Dairy Business and Select-Sire Power will be conducting a "thought-provoking" meeting titled, "Ten Ways to Improve Profit Without

Expanding." Dr. Mark Armfelt, DVM, technical service veterinarian for Monsanto Dairy Business, will be the speaker.

This meeting will take place in two locations on Monday, April 1. An early luncheon meeting will be at 11 a.m. at the Country Cupboard Restaurant in Lewisburg (11 a.m. registration, 11:45 a.m. buffet lunch, 12:45 p.m.-3 p.m. presentation). An after-dinner meeting with pie and ice cream will be at 6 p.m. at the Montour Delong Fair Building in Washingtonville (6 p.m.-7 p.m. pie and ice cream, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. presentation).

If interested in attending, call the extension office to make your reservation at (888) 922-5420 or

(570)-988-3750, or call Owen Bewley at (570) 756-3418. There is no charge for this meeting and Monsanto Dairy Business will be providing lunch or after dinner pie and ice cream at the meeting.

Lehigh To Conduct Farm Safety Camp

LYNNVILLE (Lehigh Co.) — Agriculture is one of the top three most hazardous occupations in the United States, along with mining and construction.

One in five farm families will have a serious accident this year. Children are especially at risk. In the United States each year, over 200 children die and 3000 are seriously injured in accidents involving tractors, livestock and grain storage facilities.

Lehigh County Farm Bureau's Women's Committee and Lehigh County Cooperative Extension are co-sponsoring a Farm Safety Day Camp for kids who live, play or visit farms. Parents, grandparents or guardians are invited to participate, also.

Ray and Karen Moyer will host the event at Junge Farm near Lynnvillle on Saturday, April 6, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Demonstrations and exhibits will focus on hazards and safe practices relating to: farm, tractors, machinery, electricity, fire, lawn mowers, animals, grain storages, and agricultural chemicals.

The Women's Committee will serve lunch for program participants. For additional information contact the Lehigh County Extension Office at (610) 391-9840.

NRCS Accepts Applications For Excellence In Conservation Award

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced the first annual Excellence in Conservation Award to honor nongovernmental individuals, groups, tribes, or organizations for their contributions to natural resource conservation on private land.

The nomination must include the cover page of the NRCS Excellence in Conservation Award nomination form. All nominations must be submitted with six copies on 8½-inch by 11-inch paper. Nominations must have the appropriate signature ap-

provals before submission to the Human Resources Management Division.

All awards should be sent to the following address by Tuesday, April 2: USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 14th & Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250, Room 6218-S, ATTN: S. Thompson.

For more information, contact Sandra Thompson, Human Resources Specialist, HRMD Employment & Classification Team, Washington, D.C., at (202) 720-2900 or e-mail sandra.thompson2@usda.gov.

Susquehanna County Dairy Day A Success

ELK LAKE (Susquehanna Co.) — Record crowds came to the Elk Lake School recently for the 13th annual Dairy Day. More than 1,000 spectators enjoyed demonstrations, exhibits, and a roast beef/baked fish dinner.

"Dairy Day is an opportunity for farm families to visit commercial and agricultural exhibits as well as attend educational programs," said Andrea Garner, event organizer and dairy and livestock agent. "It's also a chance for the farming community to visit with friends and enjoy the wide variety of fun and interesting events at Dairy Day," she added.

Upon entering the school, participants got a chance to take a walk through history, with an antique farming exhibit sponsored by the Endless Mountains Antique Tractor Club.

The gymnasium housed 77 exhibitor booths ranging from feed companies and banks to custom farming operations and genetics companies. One of the most popular parts of the gym was the dairy promotion committee's dairy bar. Members of the dairy princess court served 60 gallons of homemade ice cream. The Susquehanna County dairy princess and her court also served cheese and crackers.

The classrooms were packed with educational programs and exhibits. Penn State cooperative extension speaker Dave Messersmith, agronomy agent from Wayne County, educated individuals with a variety of topics including pesticide security, weed management, and soil biology. New herbicide and pesticide

points were available through these sessions.

Mike O'Connor from PSU gave a presentation on reproductive management. Other speakers were representatives of the Susquehanna County Cancer Coalition and the Department of Agriculture.

A highlight for the children was a farm safety display sponsored by the Endless Mountains Farm and Rural Safety Program. Many kids got a chance to test their knowledge about farm safety by pointing out the hazards and risks on the scaled model of a common farm.

"It was enjoyable to see kids having fun and learning about farm safety at the same time," Garner said.

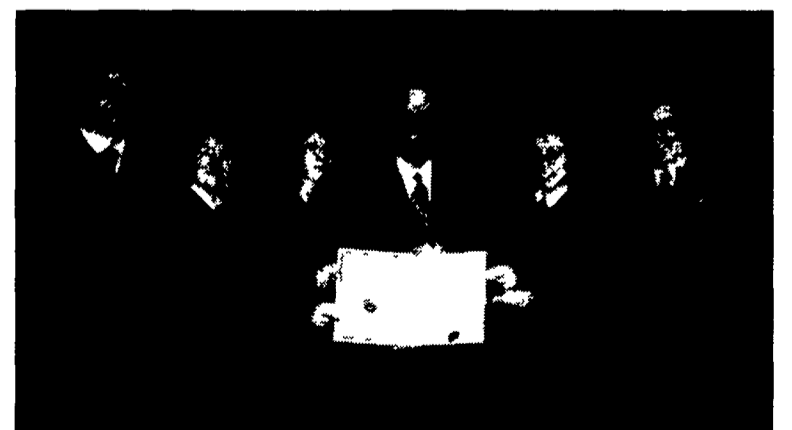
Couples Attend Minn. Conference

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Two Pennsylvania dairy couples recently attended a conference here hosted by Land O' Lakes, Inc.

Arlan and Louise Kurtz, Morgantown, and Dale and Jill Zimmerman, Reinholds, were selected to attend the four-day event for dairy producers between the ages of 20 and 40. The invitation was based on their dairy operation and interest in community and cooperative involvement.

"These young producers represent the future of agriculture. The intent of the program is to grow together, utilizing their initiative, enthusiasm, and insight," said Jack Gherty, Land O' Lakes president and CEO.

Hayes Visits Conrad Weiser



ROBESONIA (Berks Co.) — State Secretary of Agriculture Sam Hayes Jr., center, presents a state certificate to the Oley FFA at Conrad Weiser Area High School in Robesonia recently in conjunction with National Agriculture Week.