



TECHNOLOGY AND AGRICULTURE

Agriculture in central Pennsylvania in the year 2015 will have a distinctive new dimension.

Agriculture is undergoing changes in all sectors. Production agriculture will have two size classes of farms in the next 15 years. The first class will be the very large or integrated enterprises. The second important size class will consist of small and part-time farms.

Large, independently owned farms and integrated agriculture serve the needs of increasing food exports abroad and commercial food distribution domestically. The major impact in the marketing scheme for large and integrated farms is wholesale pricing determined by supply and demand of commodities. Usually their profitability is based on lower cost of production relevant to the prices that are paid.

Since marketing opportunities have been narrowed by company consolidations and integration, producing commodities at lower costs is important for large farm survival.

A new marketing system is beginning to emerge and gradually being applied by innovative farmers. There are two systems that determine the marketing and production practices applied on the farm.

The two marketing systems in agriculture are:

- Commodity-based marketing
- Product-based marketing

Small and part-time farm enterprises are becoming increasingly dependent on product based markets. Direct marketing will have a major role in profitability.

The identification of a niche market is important for small farms to remain profitable. Farms in this size category will need to develop direct marketing skills and produce value-added products to remain viable enterprises.

Small and mid-sized enterprises can market services or products to a larger audience beyond the local area through technology applications such as e-

commerce. This technology offers farmers tremendous marketing potential through extended market regions. Many businesses outside of agriculture are discovering the potential of internet sales.

The Internet caused a paradigm shift so severe that even Bill Gates missed its significance at first. The folks at Microsoft thought that the 'Net was just a plaything for academics, college kids, and military-industrial establishment spooks. Now they are betting the future of their company and their stock options on this worldwide communications phenomenon.

There is nothing evolutionary about the Internet. It is not the natural outgrowth of the telegraph or telephone or even television, although it shares some common characteristics. The Industrial Age is dead, and it has been replaced by the Communications Age.

It's not the Computer Age, even though it is powered by computer technology. The Communications Age as this era is identified, like the Industrial Age, entails a revolution in how the folks earn a living and exchange goods and services. It disrupts and reshapes markets and the very lives of those fortunate to be part of it.

When we talk about the new economy, we're talking about a world in which people work with their brains instead of their hands. Communication technology created global competition — everything from running shoes to laptop computers — but also bank loans and other services that can't be packed into a crate and shipped. In business today, innovation is more important than mass production. People are investing in new concepts or the means to create them, rather than new machines.

In business, rapid change is a constant — a world at least as different from what came before it as the industrial age was from its agricultural predecessor. A world so different its emergence can only be described as a revolution.

As all of agriculture struggles to remain profitable in an ever-changing global economy, both large, small, and mid-sized farms will need to apply e-commerce and other technology to remain sustainable. As markets continually change, farmers will need to be familiar with implementing cutting-edge technology. E-commerce is an example of technology being used as a valuable marketing tool.

Lancaster Farming's annual booklet, *A Reference Guide To Animal Health and Housing*, is scheduled April 6. The booklet's scheduled lineup includes a focus on animal care. Included are features on heat stress abatement in the summer months, hoof trimming guidelines, a look into a special-design milking parlor, heifer contracting, and a lambing story.

Morrison's Cove Announces Spring Plow Days

LINDA WILLIAMS
Bedford Co. Correspondent
NEW ENTERPRISE (Bedford Co.) — The Southern Cove Power Reunion Association will conduct its annual Spring Plow Days and Show April 6-7. The plowing will begin at 9 a.m. and run through 6 p.m. on Saturday and continue on Sunday afternoon.

Located on the club's 47-acre club show grounds, plowing equipment will include the horse-drawn variety as well as antique tractors and machinery.

Hit and Miss engines, a saw mill, and chain saw carving will also be a part of the day.

Smells of Southern Cove cooking are expected to fill the air and entice the appetites of spectators.

There will be a drawing for a 1948 Ford 8N.

Both exhibitors and campers are welcome. For more information, contact Darin Helsel at (814) 766-3715, Mel Calhoun at (814) 224-5861, or Fred Mellott at (814) 766-2703.



Plowing under all circumstances throughout history will be demonstrated at the Spring Plow Days April 6-7 at New Enterprise.

tion, contact Darin Helsel at (814) 766-3715, Mel Calhoun at (814) 224-5861, or Fred Mellott at (814) 766-2703.

The Power Reunion grounds are located off Rt. 36 on Brumbaugh Road. Turn onto Cave Road.

Drinking Water Clinic Offered In Lebanon County

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Lebanon County residents who rely on a private well, spring or cistern may be drinking tap water that contains some form of contamination, according to a Penn State Cooperative Extension educator.

"Between 60 and 70 percent of all private well water supplies in the state don't meet all drinking water safety standards," said Tom McCarty, water quality agent. "There are about one million private water supplies in Pennsylvania, mostly springs and wells fed by groundwater, and about 20,000 new wells are drilled in the state every year. Because private water systems are largely unregulated, water quality and quantity problems are all too common."

To address these problems, water specialists from Penn State's College of Agricultural

Sciences and the Environmental Resources Research Institute will offer a satellite clinic, which will be presented at Lebanon County extension office from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. April 8. The aim is to provide rural residents with the information they need to cost-effectively maintain a safe and plentiful water supply.

"Residents who receive water from a public water company or authority can be confident that their water meets drinking water safety standards," McCarty said. "But if you own your own private supply, you have sole responsibility for managing the quality and quantity of your water."

Common problems in private water supplies include bacterial contamination, lead, radon, nitrate, iron, acidity and corrosivity. Residents attending the clinic can learn how to avoid, detect, and treat the contaminants they

are likely to find in their water. Water conservation and managing a private water supply in times of drought also will be discussed.

"We'll cover drinking water standards, proper well construction and location, land-use activities associated with individuals pollutants, water testing, and water treatment," McCarty said.

McCarty recommends that private well owners hire a certified laboratory to test their water for bacteria annually, and for other chemicals at least every three years.

The clinic is free, but please call the office if you are planning to attend so that we can have enough materials for all attendees. For more information on the clinic or maintaining a private water supply, contact the Lebanon County office of Penn State Cooperative Extension at (717) 270-4391.

Blair County Honors Top Breeders, Herds

KRISTIN RUSSELL
Blair Co. Correspondent
WILLIAMSBURG (Blair Co.) — The Blair County Holstein Club conducted its annual meeting and banquet in conjunction with the DHIA awards presentations, March 18 at the Williamsburg Elementary School.

Presiding over the meeting was Holstein Club President Dennis Brumbaugh.

Guests for the evening included Blair County Dairy Princess Emily Kirsch and Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Rebecca Mowrer from Huntingdon County. The dairy princesses served a milk punch reception before the banquet.

The Blair County Holstein club recognized Judy Black and John Burket for their efforts in organizing the 2002 Pennsylvania Holstein Convention that was hosted by Blair County in Altoona earlier this month. Both were given a fruit basket. Club President Dennis Brumbaugh expressed the club's sincere appreciation for all of their hard work that resulted in one of the most successful and memorable state conventions.

New directors were elected to serve a three-year term on the Blair County Holstein Club board of directors. Serving until 2005 are Wesley Metzker of Martinsburg, Wesley Smith of Martinsburg, Bradley England of

Williamsburg, and Judy Black of Tyrone.

Judy Black presented the Holstein Junior member awards for the milk, fat, and protein production contest. Deanne and Donna Delp, daughters of Durrell and Donna Delp of Williamsburg, swept that competition with their two outstanding production cows.

Delside Delaware Bingo won first place milk, fat, and protein award in her age division. She is owned by Deanne Delp. Delside Counselor Heidi also won first place in all three categories in her age division. She is owned by Donna Delp.

Rebecca Shaw, daughter of Steven and Karyn Shaw of Williamsburg, was recognized for having the only Junior All-PA show winner from Blair County this year. Her project calf, Windy-Knoll-View Jennifer, was the reserve Junior All-PA spring calf for 2001.

David Bigelow from Pennsylvania DHIA/Dairy One presented the production awards to top herds in Blair County. He brought greetings from the management of his organization and commended Blair County on its 10th place rank for milk in Pennsylvania.

Bigelow recognized Frederick Farms of Martinsburg as the high herd in Blair County for 2001

with a herd average of 28, 323 pounds of milk, 1,137 pounds of fat, and 877 pounds of protein per cow. Also recognized was the top Jersey herd in Blair County, the Jo-Be Farm, with 18,634 pounds of milk, 824 pounds of fat, and 623 pounds of protein per cow.

In the mixed breed competition, Harold and Bernard Bailey's Roaring Spring herd ranked on top with 18,760 pounds of milk, 725 pounds of fat, and 586 pounds of protein per cow. The top Ayrshire herd for Blair County is owned by Andrew and Jennifer Heltzel of Martinsburg with 18,055 pounds of milk, 693 pounds of fat, and 543 pounds of protein.

Pennsylvania DHIA presents a herd management award. This award is based on a point system. Points are awarded for increase in production from one year to the next, low somatic cell counts, and other good management practices. Ranking in the top for Blair County were 1. Frederick Farms. 2. Thomas W. Kelly. 3. Smith Hollow Farms. 4. Rodrick and Trudy Hinish. 5. Mill Hill Farms.

Also recognized were the herds with the lowest somatic cell counts. Top herds in this category were 1. Andrew and Jennifer Heltzel. 2. Barnes Brothers. 3. Jo-Be Farms. 4. Smith Hollow Farms. 5. Thomas W. Kelly.

Did you know farmers and ranchers make up less than 2 percent of the U.S. population, and each one feeds 129 people, 101 in the U.S. and 28 abroad?

— Colorado State University Ag News