

**Ida's
Notebook**
by
Ida Risser



With Easter comes thoughts of "traditions." My dictionary says it very well — an inherited or customary pattern of action or behavior. It is handed down information or customs by word of mouth from one generation to another without written instructions.

My Grandmother always dyed her Easter eggs by using dried orange-brown onion skins. And I do the same. They give egg shells a mottled design, which is always different.

Hiding an Easter basket for children is an old tradition. I've gone from hunting my faded green basket, to

hiding some for my children, to merely listen to my children's stories of hiding them for their children. We always hid them indoors but now the grandchildren, who live in the South, can expect to hunt outside in their back yards. My son has even had his children take part in the egg roll on the White House lawn. Later, they had their pictures taken with the President of the United States.

Ham on Easter is another tradition that many families follow. Although, nowadays, lamb is a close second. My father usually sold his lambs just before Easter.

Another tradition in our house was the breakfast menu.

We always managed to have smoked tongue carefully sliced to eat with our soft boiled eggs. This meal was not repeated on other days of the year and so it was special.

Then we dressed for church in a different manner than we do today. If we could manage it, we had a new dress. With this outfit there had to be a new hat and also gloves. Today we skip the hat and gloves bit.

But no matter how we dress, the reason for celebrating Easter is the most important. We expect to have four families together for the religious holiday.

Pennsylvania Egg Producers Join In New York Celebration

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Just in time for Easter, the most popular and biggest selling time of the year for eggs, PennAg Industries Association joins with other egg producers around the country for an "Eggstravaganza" to celebrate the good news about eggs — the comeback kid of nutritional foods.

Egg consumption is up a healthy 11 percent, a wealth of new research and scientific studies have prompted changes in the American Heart Association's (AHA) 30-year stance on eggs and new research points to nutrients contained in eggs that have important health benefits.

The "Eggstravaganza" was celebrated March 30 in New York City's Central Park and brought together leading scientists, egg industry representatives and six of America's best-known and beloved television moms — from the days when standard breakfast fare was a couple of eggs.

Barbara Billingsley (Leave It to Beaver), Betty Buckley (Eight is Enough), Beverly Garland (My Three Sons), Shirley Jones (Partridge Family), June Lockhart (Lassie/Lost in Space) and Marion Ross (Happy Days) symbolically returned eggs to their rightful place in America's hearts by putting a giant-sized Humpty Dumpty back together again.

"Maybe mom really did know best when she told her TV families, 'eat your eggs, they're good for you,'" quipped Shirley Jones. "Eggs are back and, like us, they're better than ever."

"We're pleased that Americans are eating and enjoying more eggs," says Jim Shirk, assistant vice president of PennAg. "Not only are eggs good tasting, they're one of the most versatile foods, and now with research showing that they may have several health benefits, eggs seem like a perfect food to include in one's daily diet."

In addition to increased consumption, the Eggstravaganza commemorated the American Heart Association's (AHA) decision to allow an egg a day back in the American diet. The AHA's landmark decision ended a 30-year campaign that singled out eggs and limited consumption to no more than three per week. The organization now says it's OK for healthy Americans to eat an egg a day.

Scientists point to a landmark Harvard University (Journal of the American Medical Association, April 1999) study, among others, which concluded that one egg a day did not have significant impact on the risk of coronary heart disease. Research now shows that saturated fat and trans fat are the more serious contributors to heart disease.

A study published in the October 2000 Supplement to the Journal of the American College of Nutrition suggests that choline, an essential ingredient found abundantly in eggs and milk, when taken during pregnancy, may be key in the development of an infant's memory function and may improve memory capability later in life.

A separate study in the same publication showed that two carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin, found in eggs and certain vegetables, significantly reduce the risk of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. Some observational studies have shown that generous intakes of these carotenoids reduce the risk of cataracts up to 20 percent and age-related macular degeneration up to 40 percent.

The American Heart Association's journal Circulation (June 2001), published research showing that lutein, a nutrient found in egg yolks, may help to reduce the risk of heart disease. In this study of 480 middle-aged men and women, those with the highest blood levels of lutein showed the least thickening in their artery walls over an 18-month period. Research has shown lutein from egg yolks is better absorbed by the body than from a comparable serving of vegetables.

For more information about eggs, visit www.pennag.com.

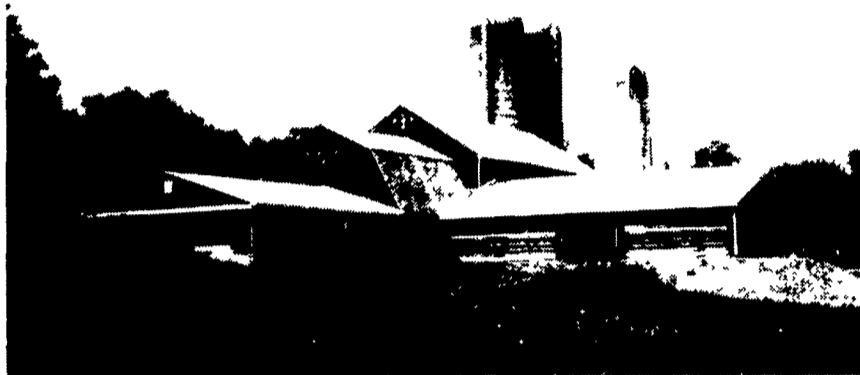
Wanted: Well-Kept Farms For Dairy of Distinction Merit

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

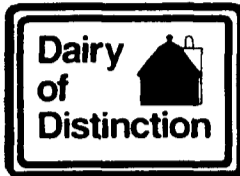
account other aspects of the farm, such as cleanliness of animals, the barnyard, feed areas, and manure management.

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 MOConnor@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

1. The Dairy of Distinction sign remains the property of the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program Committee (NEDFBP).
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Signs shall not be moved to other premises. New owners of a Dairy of Distinction farm must apply to retain the sign.
5. Replacement of damaged signs shall be at the discretion of the committee.
6. No producer shall be charged with scoring or sign expenses.
7. The judges' decision will be final.
8. Judging will take place between May 1 and May 31.
9. 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.
10. Farms that do not requalify will return the sign to their regional Dairy of Distinction Committee.