

At Stricker's, It's June Dairy (Pasture Walk) Month

ANDY ANDREWS
Editor

WERNERSVILLE (Berks Co.) — Simple pasturing has made farming a lot more rewarding for grazer Forrest Stricker.

This month marks a special place, too, for those who want to learn more about dairy grazing. Stricker will host a pasture walk at his farm this coming Monday, June 3.

June is not only Dairy Month, but also Pasture Walk Month for many full-time and even would-be graziers.

Stricker, who has been dairying since 1978, began grazing in 1993. Now, every acre is grazed at the farm, which amounts to 270 tillable acres. The herd numbers 105 head of Holstein, Jersey, and Jersey-Holstein crossbreds.

Stricker, who farms with wife Barbara and sons Greg, 18, and Jeff, 15, is not on DHIA. But he ships an RHA of 13,000 pounds to Horizon Organic Milk, to a plant in Rocksbury, Delaware County, N.Y.

Stricker also feeds about 10 pounds of grain per cow, which includes corn, spelt, and minerals. To increase production,

Stricker said he provides high-quality forage. He also tests the pasture forage quality.

"As for high quality, I let the cows tell me," said Stricker. "The cows are my forage lab."

Stricker also offers free-choice hay most of the time, except when lush. They cut hay for baling, but offer year-round pasturing.

Stricker's pastures are comprised of orchardgrass, fescue, ryegrass, clover, and alfalfa.

He plans to increase herd size to about 130-150 cows in the future.

Animal reproductive issues will be the focus of topics discussed at the pasture walk at Stricker's farm on June 3, from 1 p.m.-3 p.m. Stricker has hosted such walks before, he noted.

The invited guest to lead the discussion will be Dr. Steve Washburn, North Carolina State University. Washburn's specialty is seasonality in dairy production, but he is ready to facilitate discussion among a wide area of topics, including crossbreeding, selection strategies, herd breeds, and goals and cow numbers.

There is no charge for the event but interested participants

are asked to preregister with Penn State Cooperative Extension-Berks County, (610) 378-1327.

For more information, contact Mena Hautau, Extension Agent,

Penn State Cooperative Extension-Berks County, P.O. Box 520, 1238 County Rd., Leesport, PA 19533-0520, (610) 378-1327; fax (610) 378-7961; or e-mail mmh10@psu.edu.

Look at the *Lancaster Farming* Farm Calendar on page A10 and stories throughout the newspaper in the weeks ahead for more pasture walk days and times.

Pasture Walks Abound In Summer

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — A series of pasture walks have been organized by local graziers in cooperation with Lancaster County Cooperative Extension for people who are interested in grazing dairy cattle.

Hours for all the walks are 10 a.m.-2 p.m., DST. For biosecurity reasons, all who attend are encouraged to wear clean clothes, wash their footwear before visiting the host farm and before returning home, and stay out of feeding and young stock areas.

Lunch plans vary with each location, as described here. In an effort to help host farms make necessary arrangements, reservations will be appreciated and can be made by calling the Lancaster Cooperative Extension office at (717) 394-6851.

Dates, places, and other details are:

- June 6. Ivan Esh Farm, Lancaster, 2210 Creek Hill

Road, south of Rt. 23 and west of Hartman Station Road. Ivan is a seasonal, all-grass grazer with 120 acres and 75 cows. A pasture walk will be conducted in the morning. Afternoon discussions will center on his double-6 swing parlor, mowers, and irrigation equipment. Refreshments will be available, but bring your own lunch.

- June 27. Arden Landis Farm, north of Kirkwood at 667 Puseyville Road, west of Rt. 472. Arden is a certified organic producer with 120 acres. He milks 90 cows in a double-8 swing parlor. In the morning, there will be a pasture walk and observation of grass variety plots and liquid waste irrigation. The afternoon speaker will be Joel McNair, editor of *Graze* and writer for *Milk Weed*. Refreshments will be available, but bring your own lunch.

- Aug. 1. Jeff Stoltzfus Farm, south of Kirkwood at 32

L a k e - view Road, east of Rt. 472. Jeff is a certified organic producer, an all-grass grazer with 150 acres. He milks 70 cows in a homemade parlor and has a simple manure and mortality composting system. Drinks will be available, but bring your own lunch.

- Sept. 19. John Stoltzfus Farm, Parkesburg, north of Rt. 30 and west of Rt. 10 at 7643 N. Moscow Road. John is a certified organic producer with 50 acres of grass and 11 years of grazing experience. He milks 50 cows and feeds a mixture of grass and TMR. Lunch will be provided.

- Oct. 10. Jake Zook Farm, southwest of Christiana at 1178 White Oak Road, between Nobel Road and Bartville Road. Jake has nine years of grazing experience and 100 acres of grass. He milks 50 cows and feeds no grain. A light lunch and drinks will be provided.

Md. Opens Ethanol Station

ROCKVILLE, Md. — Montgomery County recently opened its first station to sell E85 fuel, a blend with high ethanol content. Douglas M. Duncan, county executive, opened the new station, in Rockville at the county's refueling facility. Although traditionally this site has only been available to county vehicles, Duncan is opening this E85 pump to the general public to use the fuel through a credit card system.

E85, a blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline, is a clean-burning fuel produced in the United States primarily from corn, a renewable resource. E85 improves air quality by reducing carbon monoxide, partic-

ulate matter and oxides of nitrogen, and is the leading fuel for reducing greenhouse gases. Ethanol may soon become a home-grown Maryland product.

The opening of the Montgomery County station became possible through a grant received by the Maryland Energy Administration from the United States Department of Energy. The Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board (MGPUB) has been instrumental in the actual planning and development of this project. The opening of this station supports federal and state energy policies to expand the use of alternative fuels and reduce the country's dependence on foreign oil.

Chute-Side Summer Series Offered

MIDDLETOWN (Dauphin Co.) — Due to increased interest the Pennsylvania Beef Council is offering a summer series of Chute-Side training session for the Pennsylvania Beef Quality Assurance program.

Dates and locations follow. Starting time 6 p.m. Phone numbers are for directions:

- June 26 — Tioga County: Mike Ackley Farm, Sabinsville at (814) 628-4022, Earle Robbins extension agent at (570) 724-9120.

- June 27 — Butler County:

Mercer County Livestock Auction Market. Call Trish at (724) 662-2910 or Don Hunter, Butler County extension agent at (724) 287-4761.

- July 5 — Huntingdon County: Huntingdon Fairgrounds. Call Tammy Weaver at (818) 371-0100 or Stan McKee at (814) 643-1660.

The Chute-Side training is the second part of a two-part program that enables producers and others to become BQA certified. Training and evaluation provided by extension and industry

professionals assist producers in the necessary steps to insure safety and quality of beef.

The first part, classroom sessions have been held in February and March. The first part is also available on the Website, pa-bqa.org. Participants need to complete both Classroom and Chute-Side for certification.

Please confirm your attendance at any of the above listed meetings by calling or e-mailing the Pennsylvania Beef Council at (717) 939-7000 or e-mail pstooop@pabeef.org.

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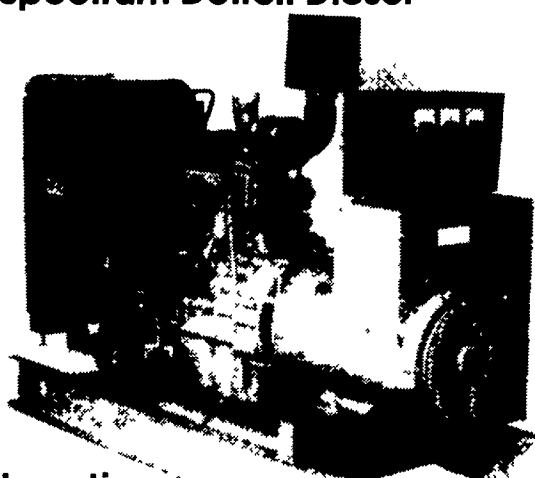
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