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Lancaster Farming

Vol. 47 No. 36 www.lancasterfarming.com Four Sections Saturday, July 6, 2002 \$36.00 Per Year \$1.00 Per Copy



Watermelon queens from many states gathered recently for a Capitol Hill promotion. Amanda Brown, third from left, front, represents Maryland and Delaware states as the Mar-Del Watermelon Queen. Turn to page B2 to read more about this energetic queen who also is a motivational speaker for the Maryland Grain Producers, served as beef ambassador for two states, and excels in many ag-related activities.

Allied Producers In New York Compensated In Cheese Crisis Lanco, Southco Not Affected

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff
 OGDENSBURG, N.Y. — The bankruptcy earlier this year of Suprema Specialties, Inc., a national cheese manufacturer, temporarily affected dairy farmers in northern New York state while an Italian cheese plant near the Ontario border here was shut down.

Producer members of the Northco Marketing Division of Allied Federated Cooperatives, Inc., Canton, N.Y., lost base premiums of between \$.20 and \$.40 per

hundredweight for a two-month period during the high-production spring period, according to David Elliott, director of quality control and membership service at Allied. Elliott said the cooperative maintained milk quality premium payments to producers, however, and milk checks were

“The whole (milk) marketplace in northern New York is on shaky ground.”
 David Elliott
 Allied Federated Cooperatives, Inc.

on time throughout the ordeal. “No farmer ever saw a late or lost milk check,” Elliott said. He noted the shutdown caused milk supplies to (Turn to Page A26)

Lehmans Review 50-Year ‘Evolution’ In Chicken Business

LOU ANN GOOD
Food And Family Features Editor

MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) — An appreciation award from Sauder’s Eggs sparked 50 years of memories in the Lehman family last week.

Anna Mary Lehman pulled out family photo albums that chronicled her and her husband Eldon’s growing chicken venture with their four children.

Even before the couple married and established a layer operation in the Mastersonville area of Manheim, chickens played an important role in their lives.

To finance an engagement present for his wife-to-be, Eldon raised broilers on his family farm

in Cumberland County. His wife remembers that it was her responsibility as a girl to “shoo” the chickens into the coops each evening as darkness fell.

After the couple married, they settled in the Manheim area and soon moved into the family farm from Anna Mary’s side of the family.

In the poultry industry, innovations were constantly changing the methods for housing and caring for chickens.

In the beginning, everything was done by hand. The eggs were gathered, washed, and sized before being taken to the egg plant. Today, hands never touch the eggs before they are transported to the plant and then to the store.

“We call the changes we’ve seen the ‘evolution of the chicken operation,’” Eldon said. “We started with everything on the floor, then we went to cages, and now the industry is again looking at floor operations.”

At first the Lehmans raised chickens in range shelters that enabled the chicks to be outside during the day and sheltered at night. When they reached pullet size, the chickens were placed inside a converted barn on the property. Chickens were placed on three floors, which required hand-carrying the eggs from the top to the bottom floors.

During this time, the Lehmans had four children. Their second son Duane grew up to form a

partnership with his dad. During his growing-up years, Duane remembers working side-by-side with his parents.

“We had to shred the bales of sugar cane and put it in tubs,” Duane said.

The shredded cane was then placed in nests and refilled as needed.

The Lehmans expanded by building a three-story chicken house. A cart hung from a ceiling rail, which could be pushed around the chicken house as the eggs were hand-gathered from the nests.

“I hated that job,” Duane said. “I was scared of the chickens pecking me. I learned to hold an egg flap against the chicken so I

couldn’t be pecked.”

From the beginning, the Lehmans marketed their eggs through R.W. Sauder.

“I remember Raymond Sauder coming to our farm with two little boys,” Anna Mary said. Those little boys (four of them) grew up, and the youngest, Paul, heads the Sauder Company today.

There was little acreage with the home farm, so in 1974, the Lehmans purchased a nearby farm on which they built a 50,000 layer house. In the 1980s, they built a second house for 80,000 layers.

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Holstein Association Amends Bylaw At National Convention

BRATTLEBORO, Vt. — During the recent National Holstein Convention, conducted at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, N.J., Holstein Association delegates were asked to take action on several bylaw amendments.

One of the amendments included authorizing the board of directors to establish the fees for membership, registration, and transfer, in addition to establishing the transfer policy.

The amendments give the board the responsibility to set financial policy and making business decisions for the organization.

Since the amendment passed by a vote of 93-44, the board of directors could increase registration fees effective July 1.

The board plans to introduce a package plan effective January 1, 2003, which includes the cost of annual membership, registration,

Tristar, classification, genetic reports, and pedigrees.

In essence, the board assumes this power from the delegates. This avoids the “rubber stamp” mentality that sometimes dictates the decisions at the executive level, according to supporters.

Although the national model sets a precedent, John Meyer, chief executive officer of the Holstein Association U.S.A., said that states have traditionally not followed the national precedent in pricing issues such as those changed in this amendment.

“State associations operate under their own set of governance rules,” he said.

There are 15 board members on the association, with two officers. In 2003, there will be 12 board members in addition to one vice president and president.



Two generations of Lehmans receive an appreciation award from Sauder’s Eggs marking the Lehmans’ 50 years of raising layer hens. From left are Guy Martin, producer-service manager; Eldon, Anna Mary, Teresa and Duane Lehman; Paul Sauder, president of Sauder’s Eggs; and Jim Lafferty, vice president.
 Photo by Lou Ann Good, food and family features editor