



## New Farmers, New Generation

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Pennsylvania  
Farm Link

### UNCOVERING FAMILY MEMBER'S FEELINGS

The process of family farm succession is about family, people, relationships, ownership, management, and what is equitable. It is driven by your family's values, wants, and concerns.

To actively engage your family in this process, you need to begin by exploring each member's expectations for the farm. You

want to know: What does the family farm mean to you? What do you expect to happen to the farm? What are your hopes and dreams for the future of the farm? What do you want from the farm business? What are your expectations regarding ownership and management of the farm?

You can begin this process by scheduling family meetings to discuss each member's wants, needs, and expectations for the

farm. These discussions will reduce assumptions and guesswork and thus potential problems. For example, I have observed family meetings that revealed previous assumptions as to who would take over the farm were misplaced on one child, when in actuality another child wanted the opportunity.

It's easy to make assumptions. Dad may assume that everyone knows he's going to quit someday and pass the farm along. He may assume that knowing that is enough to satisfy everyone and that how and under what conditions doesn't really matter. The son may assume that the farm may be his someday but is fearful of asking when it will happen. Everyone may assume that the daughter-in-law should have no input even though she may be a

key player in the smooth functioning of the farm. And the daughter that left the farm 10 years ago may still have a keen interest in the farm, even though everyone may assume she doesn't.

By exploring expectations from the outset, we can increase cooperation and efficiency among family members in putting a plan together, increase overall family satisfaction, and reduce conflict. All family members need to be considered. Only if everyone is involved can we uncover family member's feelings and bring forward all of the expectations. To avoid hard feelings and conflicts that can last a lifetime, it is essential to consider every family member, listen to them, and involve them in the process.

To get you started, have each family member write down in

private their wants, needs, and fears for the farm, including the above-listed questions. Then meet and share your answers, giving each person a chance to speak without comment from others. It will not be easy, but in the long run getting people to express their feelings and expectations will help you establish your succession planning on sound footing. Once you know family members' expectations it will help you determine the options that need to be put in place to address the needs of your family.

For more information on family farm succession planning, call the Pennsylvania Farm Link office at (717) 664-7077 or attend our Passing on the Farm workshop Dec. 17 at the Lycoming County Extension Office or on Jan. 22 at the Sunset West Restaurant in Pleasant Gap.

## Junior Holstein Convention Feb. 7-9

BETHLEHEM (Northampton Co.) — The Pennsylvania Junior Holstein Association southeast district welcomes all junior members to the 2003 Pennsylvania Junior Holstein Convention Feb. 7-9 here at the Holiday Inn.

The theme this year is "Holsteins are Key in 2003."

Friday, Feb. 7 activities will include the prepared Public Speaking Contest, the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Junior Holstein Association, along with a mixer complete with dancing and a few special surprises and activities. There will also be plenty of food and drink for everyone to enjoy while they renew old acquaintances and meet some new friends.

Saturday is packed full of contests and activities that begin with Dairy Bowl and extemporaneous speech contests. Juniors are encouraged to get their entries in for both of these state contests. There will be an opportunity to ski for the day

or snow tube in the morning or afternoon at the Blue Mountain Ski Resort. The convention hosts also have tours set up to the Discovery Science Center and the Crayola Crayon Factory, both local highlights in the area. Watch for more information on these activities.

On Saturday evening a buffet dinner will be served followed by the winners of the prepared speech contest delivering their winning speeches for all to hear and enjoy. Following the meal and speeches a dance and again some special surprises will be enjoyed by all.

Sunday morning will conclude with the awards breakfast, where many juniors will be recognized for their achievements over the past year.

There will be a well-stocked dairy bar along with commercial exhibitors who are available to share their industry knowledge with the juniors. There will also be the photo contest, display contest, and plenty of opportunity to visit with your friends from across the state.

Make sure to get your hotel and ticket order information in by Jan. 15.

## Organic Vegetable Systems From Seed To Market Workshop Set

BALLSTON SPA, N.Y. — The Regional Farm & Food Project (RFFP) is offering a workshop called Organic Vegetable Systems from Seed to Market, scheduled to take place in this Saratoga County, N.Y. town from Jan. 31 to Feb. 2.

The workshop will feature the teaching and shared experiences of three fulltime organic farmers: Dave Colson of New Leaf Farm, Durham, Maine; David Hambleton of Sisters Hill Farm, Stanfordsville, N.Y.; and David Marchant of River Berry Farm, Fairfax, Vt.

Topics will be of value to newer farmers developing whole farm practices as well as experienced growers seeking to refine and improve aspects of their operations. Topics will include soil, weed, and pest management, starting and transplanting, cover cropping, harvest systems, post-harvest handling, marketing, and finances.

For more information, call (518) 427-6537 or e-mail farmfood@capital.net.

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8:30 am - 9 am

Registration

9 am - 10:15 am

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10:15 am - 11:30 am

Dr. Nate Winkleman

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11:30 am - 12 noon

National Pork Board Spokesman

12 noon - 1 pm

Lunch and Annual Meeting

1 pm - 2 pm

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