

Lancaster DHIA Celebrates 10 Years Of Growth

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff
SMOKETOWN (Lancaster Co.) — The continued growth of Lancaster DHIA is an exception to the trend found in dairy herd improvement associations across the country, according to Steve Hershey, president.

Officers at Lancaster DHIA's annual banquet in Smoketown on Tuesday reported 146,483 cows on test, an 11 percent increase from last year and about three times as many cows as the organization serviced when it first started in 1992.

"That is not normal for DHIA affiliates in America," Hershey said. He reported seeing lackluster

growth and depressed working environments in his visits to affiliates in other areas.

At Lancaster DHIA, however, "From top to bottom, the attitude is positive," Hershey said.

This year, 211 new herds signed up for service, making a total of 2,350 herds in 24 counties in Pennsylvania and counties in Maryland and several other neighboring states. New testing circuits were begun in Bradford and Bedford counties.

In another highlight of the year, Jay Mylin, Lancaster DHIA manager, was named winner of the Martin A. Wilson Management Award.

Presented by the National

DHIA last March, the award recognized Mylin's excellence in managing Lancaster DHIA through its first decade.



Jay Mylin, right, is congratulated by Steve Hershey, Lancaster DHIA president, for winning the Martin Wilson DHIA Manager of the Year Award, presented last March by the National DHIA.

Mylin praised the team of 44 DHIA technicians as well as dairy farmers, Lancaster DHIA's "loyal customers," for their contribution to the success of the organization.

"There is one core value that we come back to, and that is relationships," Mylin said.

John Clay, director of Dairy Records Management Service (DRMS), the company based in Raleigh, N.C. that manages Lancaster DHIA's herd records, was featured speaker for the day. He called Lancaster DHIA a "model" of commitment to its

farmers.

"I'm not aware of a service affiliate that takes a more aggressive approach to educating its members," he said.

One innovation available to members in recent years is the Pocket Dairy handheld computer, along with the PC Dart dairy herd management system.

Clay noted that Lancaster DHIA was the the fastest DRMS affiliate in turnaround time from the date when cows are tested to when the data is mailed, and within the top three affiliates for laboratory turnaround time.

Lancaster DHIA also honored Glenn Shirk, recently retired Lancaster County dairy agent, for his close work with Lancaster DHIA from even before its official beginning in 1992 to the present.

"You have what you enjoy now because of the efforts of the (reorganization) team," Shirk said. "It did not come without a lot of effort and a lot of alliances."

Top production herd awards by breed were named as follows:

- Holstein: Marvin Stoltzfus, Leola, 33,698 pounds milk, and top protein at 961 pounds.
- Jersey: Tol-Je-So Farm 1, Port Deposit, Md., 20,047 pounds milk.
- Brown Swiss: Jobo Holstein Farm, Gettysburg, 21,592 pounds milk.
- Ayrshire: Don and Pam Gable, Elverson, 19,715 pounds milk.
- Guernsey: Millie and Jim Widmann, Kirkwood. 18,236 pounds milk.



John Clay, director of Dairy Records Management Service, Raleigh, N.C., praises the Lancaster DHIA for its high level of service.

• Low SCC herd award went to Gary and Jenny Bowman, Quarryville, for a somatic cell count of 60,000.



Production award winners at the Lancaster DHIA banquet are, from left, Don and Pam Gable, Ayrshire, Elverson; Jennifer Lawrence, Jersey, Tol-Je-So Farm, Md.; Marvin Stoltzfus, Holstein, Leola; Dick Linde, for Millie and Jim Widmann, Kirkwood; and Jenny Bowman, low SCC count, Quarryville.

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