

**Ida's
Notebook**
by
Ida Risser



We've had snow again. As my car is parked outside it has to be cleaned off quite often. Of course, we have a two-car garage, but one part is needed to store other things. When the lock on the door freezes, that is just another reason to wish for warmer weather.

The other night we were invited to a taffy pull. I'd never been to one before but I often heard of it. The Amish neighbors started with two large kettles on the stove which had to be stirred continually. When the correct thickness was reached, it was removed from the stove, and the mass was cooled until it could be pulled.

And I do mean pulled. The young men stood about five or six feet apart and did what appeared to be a complicated procedure as they exchanged long strings of candy. I was encouraged to butter my hands and try it too. But, I did not do too well and ended up with too much candy on my hands.

The whole group gathered around the table to cut the candy in pieces with a scissors and then wrap each individual piece. They flavored it with spearmint and peppermint. Everyone got to take some home.

Recently, we saw a travelogus on Egypt, and I'm not sorry that I never got to visit it. We were shown sand and more sand with lots of camels. They are mostly raised for meat. There were many pyramids and ancient grave sites too.

My grandchildren went tubing. Now I thought that was sitting in an inner tube and floating down a stream. But, this was using a tube to go down a big snow-covered hill in York County. I've got to keep up with the times.

Apply For Dairy Of Distinction Award By April 15

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.

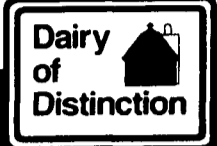
The award is based on the idea that attractive farmsteads enhance consumer confidence in the wholesomeness of milk and stimulate milk sales and public support for the industry. Dairies receiving the highest scores in each of 10 Pennsylvania districts will be awarded an 18- by 24-inch Dairy of Distinction 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 account other aspects of the farm, such as cleanliness of animals, the barnyard, feed areas and manure management.



Pictured is the Kulp Family Dairy, Blair County, one of Pennsylvania's Dairies of Distinction for 2002.



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 HYPERLINKrmail to: MOCConnor@psu.edu.

Since 1987, Pennsylvania's Dairy of Distinction Program has recognized more than 700 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.

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 products 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 the 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 on their Dairy of Distinction score card. Your cooperative or milk handler will be contacted to approve your milk quality.

RULES FOR THE DAIRY OF DISTINCTION AWARD

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" x 4" x 12' or iron pipe 2" x 12' 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.

**Dairy of Distinction
2003 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 of 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" x 24" 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:
Michael O'Connor
 Department of Dairy and Animal Science
 324 Henning Building
 Penn State University
 University Park, PA 16802

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