

April Conference To Examine Stray Voltage On Dairy Farms

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.)—More than 20 researchers, educators, consultants, and investigators will share their knowledge and answer your questions at Stray Voltage and Dairy Farms: A Conference for Farm Advisors, Educators, Utilities, and Public Policy Advisors. The conference will discuss the impact, sources, measurement, prevention, and mitigation of stray voltage on dairy and other livestock farms. It will take place April 9-11, in Camp Hill.

Stray voltage is defined by the USDA as “a difference in voltage between two surfaces that may be contacted simultaneously by an animal.” When this occurs, the cow acts to complete the circuit and experiences a small shock or “tingle.” Research shows that stray voltage may increase cow stress and health problems. Sometimes, however, problems attributed to stray voltage are in fact caused by something else, and a multidisciplinary team is needed to identify the actual problem.

The conference will begin with an overview of electricity and wiring fundamentals to ensure that

everyone has the background necessary to understand subsequent, more technical presentations. The program will allow ample time for questions and discussion. It is sure to be a unique educational opportunity for many, including veterinarians, dairy scientists, extension educators, engineers, builders, rural electric contractors, agribusiness, utilities, public policy advisors, and milk cooperatives.

Specific objectives of the conference are to:

- provide an overview of the fundamentals of electricity, power distribution, and farm and home wiring systems,

- present research accomplished since the 1991 publication *Effects of Electrical Voltage/Current on Farm Animals: How to Detect and Remedy Problems*, the most current USDA handbook on the topic,

- discuss on-farm and off-farm sources of stray voltage, the National Electric Code, measurement of stray voltage, data interpretation, and mitigation technology,

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