

Penn State Cooperative Extension Capitol Region Dairy Team

BEGIN PLANNING FOR SPRING LABOR NEEDS

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As the sun lingers longer each evening in the western sky and blustery March yields to rainy April, many dairy producers' thoughts turn to crops and fieldwork. They dream of spending warm days in the fields harvesting the first hay crop and planting their favorite corn hybrids. Dairy producers should pause from their daydreaming to ponder how the daily barn work will continue when the fieldwork begins.

Dairy farm businesses that produce their own crops need to recognize that their labor and management requirements increase dramatically during planting and harvest times. In many cases dairy managers give priority to field work because they know how critical it is to harvest and plant in a timely manner.

When the same workforce that is normally employed for barn work is pressed into service in the field, stress results. Workers will either rush through their barn work in order to get into the field, or a skeleton crew will be left to do the work that normally employs more people. In either case, the result is usually a reduction in the quality and quantity of care given to the milking herd.

The costs of reduced care and management are not always understood, but honestly consider these questions:

How much less dry matter will cows eat on a given day because the feeder didn't have time to clean out the feedbunks? How much milk production will this cost me? If the herdsman wasn't driving the pack tractor on the bunker silo, would he have diagnosed that cow with ketosis before she developed a displaced abomasum? So we don't watch for heats as closely in May and June, we can always catch back up on breeding during July and August, right?

It should be clear to you at this point that stretching the regular workforce to cover the demands of peak planting and harvest time may not be your best plan. The costs associated with neglecting some aspects of cow care and management may greatly outweigh the cost of hiring additional labor. Let's take a look at three different labor options.

Option one is to turn to the services of custom equipment operators. You could simply stop using the dairy workforce to perform field operations and hire others to do it. This frees the dairy workforce to continue their regular work routines, but you still must manage the decision making with regard to fieldwork. Consider this option, especially before you invest in new field equipment.

Option two is to hire additional labor to operate the field equipment. Once again, this frees the dairy workforce to stay at their



regular jobs while others do the fieldwork. There are a few disadvantages with this option. Fieldwork is often performed on a last-minute basis, you must wait for the weather to be right and then try to get everything done in a short period of time. It is often difficult to schedule people to work for you on short notice, especially if they also work at other jobs. Another disadvantage is that there is little opportunity to train people in advance on how to operate the equipment.

Option three is to bring in seasonal help for certain parts of the dairy operation. Milking, calf feeding, cleanup, and bedding are dairy jobs that someone must perform year round. Dairy producers can hire and train additional labor to cover these jobs during the busiest parts of the crop season, and they can schedule these types of jobs in advance. This frees the regular workforce (often family members or long-term employees with equipment operating experience) to do fieldwork on a short-notice basis. It also allows them to stay in the field for extended periods without the interruption of milking and feeding.

There are costs associated with whatever option you choose. Choosing not to employ additional labor will lead to hidden costs in the form of lost productivity. An adequate supply of well-trained labor is the only way to ensure that you can both provide plenty of high-quality care to the milking herd and complete the fieldwork in a timely manner. Start planning now so that you will have a well-trained workforce in place before the pressure begins.

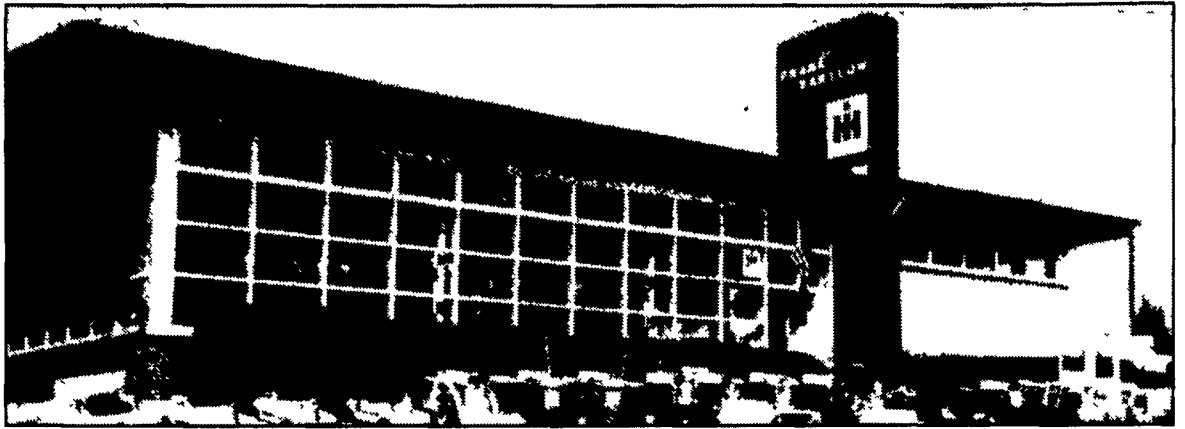
Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association Offers Scholarships

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — The Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association has announced it will present two additional scholarships this year to young persons who are planning a career in the cattle industry.

Funding for one of the \$500 scholarships is provided by Pfizer Animal Health Company, Inc. in connection with Pfizer's Dectomax Extra Education Dollars ("DEED") program. The second \$500 scholarship is provided by the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's

Walk Down Memory Lane

IH Prototype Dealership Open For Tours June 26-28



This building was built in 1946 based on International Harvester's prototype specifications. Today Frank Bartlow IH Dealership showcases much of the history connected with IH tractors and equipment. It will be open for tours during the Red Power Roundup, June 26-28.

MILLVILLE (Columbia Co.) — The Frank Bartlow International Dealership, Millville, closed in 1972, but will open for tours June 26-28 during the Red Power Roundup at Bloomsburg Fairgrounds.

The International Harvester (IH) prototype building evokes nostalgia that only "Red Power" fans can understand. Sort of like McDonald's golden arches, the prototype building design was identified throughout the U.S. as an IH dealership.

In 1946, the first day of deer season, Frank Bartlow began construction based on the IH Company's specifications. Offices are made of knotty pine and glass. The parts room houses bins constructed of lumber from trees harvested on the land on which it sets. Bartlow sawed and planed the wood himself.

The showroom has floor-to-ceiling glass windows that illuminate the International Harvester/McCormick Deering wares that were on display. For the past 35 years, a 1928 10-20 McCormick Deering tractor with rubber tires, owned by Bartlow's grandson Rollie Bartlow, has been on display. During the open house, many other IH tractors, Cub Cadets, IH equipment, refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, and IH memorabilia will be displayed.

The Bartlow building is unique in that it incorporates a basement beneath the showroom and parts room. The basement has a 12x12-foot door on the north end for easy access to the street. This enabled a large area to store equipment that was delivered to the dealership.

The building also served as a social gathering for the commu-

nity. The grand opening was celebrated with square dancing and plenty of food. For several years, the annual IH Pancake Days attracted crowds and promoted sales.

Today Tubby Bartlow, Frank's son, owns the building. With the help of family, friends, and the local International Harvester Collectors Club of Central Pennsylvania, Chapter 17, Bartlow refurbished the building to its original condition. The site has been the home of the growing Red Power Showdown for the past two years.

At the Red Power Roundup, June 26-28, at the Bloomsburg Fairgrounds, busses will provide transportation to the Bartlow Dealership, about a 15-minute drive from the fairgrounds.

Bartlow and his family will be at the site to answer questions about the prototype building.

Lancaster Dairy Day Set For Feb. 18

The new 2003 Lancaster County Family Dairy Day will take place at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center on Tuesday, Feb. 18 from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. This year's family dairy day will focus on dairy farm strategies for surviving and prospering during times of low milk prices. There will be dynamic speakers on the program, more than 25 exhibitor displays and demonstrations, and a producer luncheon. Dairy farmers are invited to attend for part of the day or the entire program, and the whole family is welcome!

Also new this year, the Penn State Family Living program will offer pressure canner gauge testing at no charge to attendees, and an optional afternoon program for farm spouses on "What's New in Home Canning."

The 2003 Lancaster Dairy Day will be a day for dairy producers, their families, and industry to mix and mingle. The cost of lunch is \$5, payable at the door, with the remainder sponsored by area exhibitors. Walk-ins are welcome but we would encourage pre-registrations that will allow us to plan for meal numbers, so please register by February 10.

To register, call (717) 394-6851, or send your name and the number attending to: Lancaster County Cooperative Extension, Attn: Dairy Day Registration, 1383 Arcadia Road-Room 1, Lancaster, PA 17601.

To travel to the Farm and Home Center, follow Rt. 30 to Rt. 72 (Manheim Pike exit). Turn right and follow 72 south toward Lancaster. Go approx. 100 feet. Turn left between Marine Sales and Honda car dealership onto Service Road. At stop sign, go straight. You may park in front of the center.

The schedule is as follows:
•9:00 a.m.: Displays and exhibits open. Pressure Canner Testing, all morning (bring your dial gauge pressure canner lid)

CONCURRENT SESSIONS
•9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m.: "Strategies in Nutrition to Increase Profit\$," Dr. Bob Munson, New Bolton Center and Bruce Kreider, White Oak Mills. "How is Your Dairy Business Performing?" Vinton Smith, Penn State Extension Dairy Farm Management Agent.

•10:25 a.m.-11:10 a.m.: "Biosecurity on Dairy Farms," Dr.

Charles Gardner, DVM, Agway. "Crop Insurance Strategies," Nevin Dourte, Ruhl Insurance.

•11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.: "Strategies for Using Your Farm Resources," Glenn Shirk, Shirk's DairySense Building Your Plan for the Transfer of the Farm Business," James R. Clark, Esq., James Clark & Associates, Willow Street.

•12:15 p.m.: Lunch and Visit Trade Show.

•1:15 p.m.: "Strategies for Success in Your Dairy Farm Business," Dr. Lou Moore, Penn State.

•2:00 p.m.: Emerging Technologies Forum, Dr. Arlen Mills, extension veterinarian, with selected industry exhibitors.

Optional Program for Spouses:
•1:15 p.m.: "What's New in Home Canning," Nancy Wiker, extension agent, family and consumer sciences.

•2:00 p.m.: "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate? Considerations for Transfer of Personal Possessions," Robert Thee, PhD, extension agent, financial management.

•3:00 p.m.: Trade show closes.

Association from special gifts to the PCA.

The applicants must meet the following criteria: be a high school senior or currently enrolled in a two- or four-year college; demonstrate interest in the beef, dairy, and/or veal industries; express assurance in furthering education in college, vocational school, etc.; and possess leadership skills and show intentions of eventually serving the beef, dairy, and/or veal industries in some manner.

Those interested in applying for the Pfizer DEED scholarship and the PCA scholarship need only fill out one form to apply for both scholarships. However, only members of Pennsylvania Junior Cattlemen's Association or applicants whose parents are members of the PCA are eligible for the PCA scholarship.

Applications must be post-marked on or before March 1. Winners will be awarded scholarships at the annual Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association Ban-

quet on Thursday, March 27 before the Pennsylvania Beef Expo in State College.

To obtain scholarship applications or for more information, contact the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association, 862 Webster Drive, State College, PA 16801, phone/fax: (814) 238-5888, e-mail to llw@psu.edu.

More information about PCA, the Beef Expo and other beef industry activities is available on the PCA Website at www.pacattle.org.