

Pennsylvania Garden Expo Will Be In Full Bloom March 14-16

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Regardless of the weather, spring will come into full bloom with the first annual Pennsylvania Garden Expo on March 14-16. The show will be conducted in the new 175,000 square foot Exhibition Hall at the Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg.

The three-day show for home gardeners includes up to 20 feature gardens, ranging in size from 500 to 3,000 square feet.

A Watering for Wildlife Garden, by That Fish Place/That Pet Place of Lancaster, incorporates a number of features designed to attract wildlife to your back

yard. The display fills a 20 foot x 25 foot area and is a design easily recreated by a homeowner. A large pond leads to a steep waterfall dropping into a more shallow pool that has a sloping bottom making access easy for small animals and birds. The small pool feeds into a stream, which is

spanned by a custom footbridge leading to a sitting area by the large pond. Large evergreens at the edge of the display provide refuge for birds while pond plants in the small pond provide color and habitat for frogs and small fish. The garden also includes flowers that attract butterflies.

A Children's Garden from Hershey Gardens includes several themed areas. The themes range from celebrating ABC's using pansies to a Sun and Moon garden featuring yellow and white flowers. The Children's Garden also includes a butterfly rest area, an herb garden in the shape of a wagon wheel and a riverbank picnic area. You can even see the Spa-tacular, a fragrant garden with a tub and plants you can use to clean yourself.

Levendusky Nursery and Landscape of Wellsville will design A Natural Garden using stones, plants and materials quarried, grown and produced in Pennsylvania. The display will include a flagstone walkway, gazebo, a waterfall, trees with unique bark and an assortment of flowers in full bloom.

The Susquehanna Garden Railroad Society is constructing a Railroad Garden, which includes a waterfall, pond and approximately 250 feet of track. There will be trains running simultaneously on three loops, one that crosses over itself on a bridge and goes through a tunnel. The railroad garden also features a raised ridge down its center, which will be populated by small evergreen trees. Completing the display are 10 to 12 buildings, people, vehicles and animals.

Also on display will be a Natural Habitat Backyard Garden from three state agencies (the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and the Pennsylvania Game Commission), an Oriental Design/Bonsai Display Garden from Nature's Way Nursery in Harrisburg and a Natural and Oriental Garden from Hanselman Landscape in Manheim.

In addition, Hively Farm and Nursery in Dover is contributing a Backyard Living Garden, Plantscape and Design in Lancaster is creating a Spirituality Garden, River Valley Landscapes in Wrightsville is designing a Natural Retreat Garden, Smith Landscape and Construction of New Cumberland is providing a Secluded Backyard Garden, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay in Camp Hill is contributing a Backyard Stream Buffers display and an Alfresco Garden will be created by Shiloh Nurseries in Emigsville.

The Pennsylvania Garden Expo also features dozens of free gardening seminars scheduled for each hour of the show on all three days. You can also enjoy various educational exhibits and browse a marketplace with vendors selling everything from seeds to greenhouses.

The Pennsylvania Garden Expo runs 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on March 14 and 15 and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on March 16. Tickets are \$10, with children under age 12 admitted free of charge. Convenient parking is available at the Elmerston Avenue Farm Show parking lot for five dollars per car.

Advance tickets can be ordered by sending a check or money order made out to the Pennsylvania Green Industry Foundation to: Pennsylvania Garden Expo, 509 N. Second St., Harrisburg, Pa. 17101.

More information on the show itself is available online at www.pagardenexpo.com.

Elderhostel Courses For People Over 55

Penn State offers a variety of Elderhostels for people age 55 and over. Whatever your interest, there's a program for you. Here are some examples: stamp collecting, duplicate bridge, bird-watching, how to date an antique, sing with Fred Waring's chorus, gold, and more. Visit their website at <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/Elderhostel>, or call (814) 863-1738.

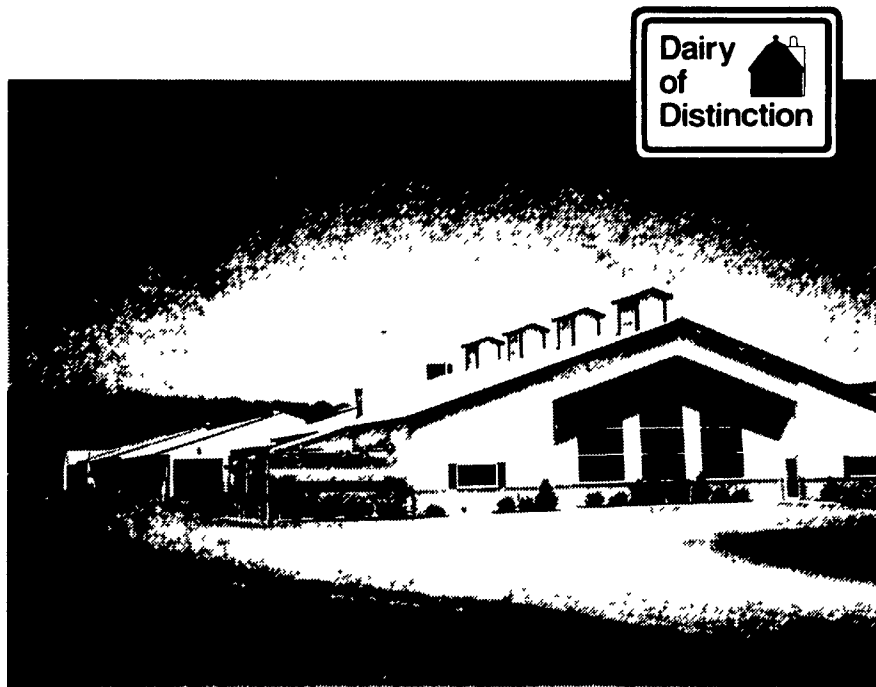
Apply For Dairy Of Distinction Award By April 15

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 HYPERLINKmailto:MOConnor@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.

Dairy of Distinction 2003 Pennsylvania Application

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.

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