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**Saturday, March 22**

Atlantique City Spring Festival, Atlantic City Convention Center, thru March 23. Saturday 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., (800) 526-2724.  
Beginning Beekeepers Seminar, Lysock View Complex. (570) 433-3040.

Maple Syrup Production Tour, Bradford-Sullivan Forest Landowners' Association, Dewey Meadow Maple Warren Center, 10 a.m., (570) 746-1844.  
Pa. Brown Swiss Association Spring Meeting, Bonanza Restaurant, Carlisle, 11 a.m., (717) 933-8995.  
Delaware Valley College Open House, College Student Cen-

ter, Doylestown, 10:15 a.m.-2 p.m., (215) 489-2211.  
New Hampshire Maple Weekend, New Hampshire Maple Producers Association, Concord, N.H., thru March 23, (603) 225-3757.  
Spring Garden Seminar, Government Services Building, West Chester, (610) 696-3500.  
Introduction to Holistic Management, Hudson, N.Y. Contact Regional Farm and Food Project, (518) 427-6537. Also Saturday, March 29.  
Spring Judging Contest, Ag Arena, University Park, (814) 863-3662.  
Maryland Brown Swiss breeders annual meeting, New Midway Fire Hall, New Midway.  
Adams County Beef Ball, Bonneauville Fire Company,

4:30 p.m., (717) 338-0894.

**Sunday, March 23**

Sap Boiling Program, Sugar Bush, Knoxville area, Tioga County Woodland Owners Association, (814) 326-4802.  
Perry, Juniata Woodland Owners Association meeting, Bureau of Forestry office in Blaine, 2 p.m., (717) 536-3191.

**Monday, March 24**

Introduction to RUSLE, Dauphin County Ag Center, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Also March 25, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Holmer, Wayne County Grazing School, Part 1 of 3, Mrs. Yoder's Kitchen, Mt. Hope, Ohio, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m., (330) 674-3015.  
Southeast Pennsylvania Swine meeting, Midway Diner, Rt. 78, Exit 16 (formerly 5), 6 p.m., (610) 378-1327.

**Tuesday, March 25**

PDMP annual meeting and conference, Holiday Inn, Grantville, thru March 26, (888) 373-7232.  
Dauphin County Pesticide Update, Upper Dauphin High School, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (717) 921-8803.  
Pruning Workshop, Central Pa. Institute of Science and Technology, Pleasant Gap, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Winemaker Technical Meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 2 p.m.-5 p.m.  
Dairy Farmers of America Inc. annual meeting, Hyatt Regency Crown Center Hotel, Kan-

sas City, Mo., thru March 26, (816) 801-6678.  
Warren County Ag Day, 4-H Building on Warren County Fairgrounds, Pittsfield, 9:30 a.m., (814) 563-9388.  
Countywide Farm Safety Night, Lebanon Valley Expo Center, 6:30 p.m.  
Resources Issues Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, (814) 863-0401.  
Lancaster Holstein Club Tour to Mifflin County, leaves Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 a.m., (717) 653-2612.  
Aeration Tillage Field Day, Farm of Forrest Stickler, Wernersville area, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., (610) 678-7629.  
Washington, D. C. Legislative Tour thru March 26, bus departs Pa. Dept. of Ag, 2301 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg, 8:30 a.m. Returns 6 p.m. March 26.  
Cedar Crest Young Farmers Awards Banquet, Schaeffers-town Fire Hall, Schaeffers-town, 7 p.m., (717) 273-2168.

**Wednesday, March 26**

Workshop: Field Loss and Barnyard Evaluation, Dauphin County Ag Center, Dauphin, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. thru March 27, March 27 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Dauphin County Pesticide Update, Dauphin County Ag Center, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (717) 921-8803.  
Living on a Few Acres Workshop, Soils, Lime and Fertilizer, Neshaminy Center, Doylestown, Bucks County Extension, (215) 345-3283. Also April 2, 9, 12, 16, 23, 30.

## F.M. Brown's Sons, Inc. Conducts Meetings

BIRDSBORO (Berks Co.) — F.M. Brown's Sons, Inc. recently concluded a series of three customer meetings with emphasis placed on dairy nutrition and management.

Mark Wagner, director of nutrition at Brown's discussed two areas of recent interest at Brown's.

The first was the value of sugars in dairy rations. Research has documented the positive effects of having 4.5 to 6 percent sugar in dairy rations. Ensiled feeds are very low in sugar, as are many of the by-products being sold as forage substitutes. When these low-sugar rations are fed, the ability of the high-producing cows to digest forages is impeded.

Wagner discussed problems associated with current net energy prediction equations. Most use only acid detergent fiber (ADF) to predict energy, but a more accurate system should also include starch, nonstarch carbohydrates, digestible fiber, fat, and protein content of the plant. Brown's forage analyses provide these important nutrients, but many forage reports do not even look at starch level, which is the most important indicator of net energy in corn silage. Wagner reviewed a new equation from the University of Wisconsin that incorporates all these values to better estimate corn silage's true net energy value for lactation.

As part of a "Closer Look" Program, Brown's gathered water samples from more than 75 customers' wells and, with the help of Agri-Analysis, had these samples analyzed for coliform bacteria, nitrate nitrogen, pH, and 10 major and trace minerals. Taking a closer look at water quality was one of the highlights of the meeting, and Dr. Dana Tomlinson of Zinpro Corporation shared his thoughts on why water quality in dairy herds is important.

He stressed that not all water is equal. He also stressed that next to air, water is the most important nutrient we provide for our cows.

Tomlinson cited research by Ennsley from Iowa that showed watering space per cow, water trough cleaning, and distance between the feed

bunk and water source were all correlated with higher milk production. He discussed maximum recommended levels for minerals and other compounds in water.

Nutritionally your water may be fine, but because of high content of sulfur, nitrates, manganese, and iron, cows may not want to drink their fill because they dislike the taste. Subsequently, cows do not milk as well as their genetic potential would indicate.

He stated that elements such as calcium, often detected at high amounts in water samples, have little impact on nutrition since the total calcium intake from water is still less than 10 percent of a cow's minimum daily requirements.

Carl Brown, sales manager of F.M. Brown's Sons, Inc., discussed the results of the Brown's Water Testing Survey of 2003. Seventy-five wells were tested, and 36 wells, or 48 percent had coliforms higher than 1 colony per 100 ml. Also 31 percent had nitrate nitrogen greater than 10 ppm, while 12 percent had pH below 6.5. All these levels will interfere with nutrient digestibility and metabolism. Most wells were high in calcium and magnesium, making the water fairly hard. Most wells also had concentrations of iron and manganese higher than recommended. This gives the water a metallic taste cows don't like, but has little impact in meeting or exceeding their nutrient demands for these minerals.

Several water-conditioning companies were interviewed for this presentation, and all stated that if water quality is a concern, treat coliforms first. Each farm has a unique set of problems that should be addressed individually. Brown then reviewed the various types of water treatment systems available, including water conditioners, UV lights, chlorine injectors, chlorine pill dispensers, electronic deposit control systems, and reverse osmosis systems. He reviewed the estimated prices and the advan-

tages and disadvantages for each system.

Dr. Elliot Block, director of research at Church & Dwight, presented a talk on Megalac-R. The title, "The Effects of Feeding Fat To Dairy Cows On Reproduction: It's Not Just About Energy" neatly summarized his talk. He discussed why fat should no longer be considered just for its energy value. Fats are made up of fatty acids and each type of fatty acid has a different effect on the rumen. Saturated fatty acids are easy to feed, but are hard for cows to digest. These fats are usually solid at room temperature. Unsaturated fats (usually classified as oils) remain liquid at room temperature and have a high digestibility in the intestine.

When oils are fed at high levels, they interfere with fiber digestion and cause severe milk fat and milk protein depression. To overcome these negative aspects of adding unsaturated fats to the rumen, Megalac was invented. Megalac helps keep unsaturated fats from interfering with fiber digestion in the rumen while allowing for excellent digestion of these fats in the intestine.

Dr. Steve Moreland, DVM, director of technical services for Braes Feed Ingredients, discussed the general concepts of using botanical compounds in feeds. BFI has been a leader in this area in the past 40 years, and has developed a product called Apex that is added to Brown's Calf Cox-Guard and Grow-N-Glow to get calves off to a fast healthy start. Apex contains a group of specific herbs that contain aromatic, antiseptic, and antioxidant properties. When fed to calves, it improves growth and increases feed intake.

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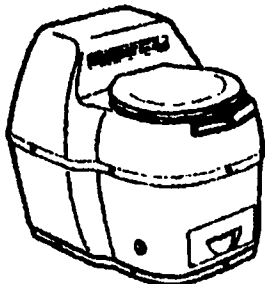
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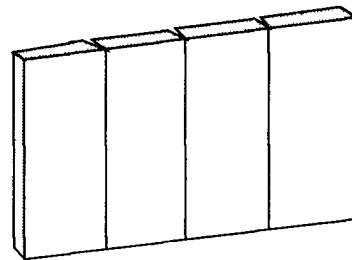
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