

Dairy Success Strategy: Watch Overall Herd Health

(Continued from Page A24)

possible

- Milk new animals last
- Maintain good ventilation
- Keep things clean
- Provide vaccination programs
- Avoid overcrowding, which creates stress
- Observe a sound nutrition program.

Gardner noted that cows that are sitting in stalls and chewing their cud are more comfortable and resistant to disease. If the cows are standing, they are not comfortable and stress could lower their immune system, setting up disease pressure on the farm.

Lou Moore, Penn State ag agronomist, debunked several "myths" about the ag industry at the Dairy Day.

Moore noted some of the good things about today's economy:

- Interest rates are at a 41-year low
- The national economy is at a period of essentially no inflation (at 1.2-1.8 percent)
- Though consumer confidence awaits the outcome of the potential next Gulf War, people have been taking advantage of special financing.

The bad news about the economy:

- Unemployment is at 5.8 percent nationally.
- Economic recovery is too mild.
- It was a "lousy" holiday season for retailers, with only 1.1 percent growth.
- The stock market declined 17 percent from last year.
- Surging oil prices and the prospects of war are bearing down hard on the economy.
- Ag needs "all the help it can get," said Moore. We're producing too much milk, meat, and eggs, he said.

Moore noted the U.S. has experienced the seventh consecutive year of dramatic corn yields, this one at nine billion bushels. We use more than nine billion bushels per year, however, and have only a 924 million bushel inventory. About 169 million bushels are used in Pennsylvania.

A dramatic note: milk cow operations from 1992-2001 decreased 43 percent. In another 10 years, Moore noted, will we still have a dairy industry?

Moore said that in 1980, there were 780,000 hog operations in the country. In 2002, that dropped to 70,000 hog operations.

Clearly, there are larger farms and more consolidation.

But still, 80 percent of the dairy operations throughout the U.S. have less than 100 cows.

One myth that Moore wants to dispel is that people believe the New York ag industry is bigger than Pennsylvania. That's simply not true. In total farm receipts, New York ranks at \$3.42 billion while Pennsylvania towers over it at \$4.4 billion. Lancaster County is the largest dairy county in the U.S.

Competition for the Pennsylvania dairy farmer now comes from California and other western states, dairy imports from other countries, New York, South Carolina, and the "farmer down the road."

Moore urged producers to consider crop insurance, which brings on average about \$3 for every \$1 spent. Last year, insurance provided about \$10 for every \$1 spent.

These days, you can't simply grow a product and find some ways to get "rid" of it.

"Become a marketer," said Moore. "You need to know what the co-op is doing and why they're doing it."

Glenn Shirk, Shirk's Dairy Sense, reviewed his research on the "power of one more lactation" that helps to provide more returns for the dairy producer investment dollar.

Shirk, a longtime dairy agent in Lancaster who recently retired from extension, told producers that "cows are your best investment, period."

He asked those who attended dairy days, "When's the last time your equipment reproduced?"

Shirk provided reasoning to invest and manage the capital of the dairy business wisely. "You need to focus heavily on preserving the profit margin," said Shirk. "Work with your service people and get serious about tackling those problems at the source. We're talking about your investments, your livelihood."

Shirk said producers need to be considerate of several factors:

- Be considerate about cow udders
- Ensure the health of the cow's lungs
- Group heifers by size and social status
- Invest in cow health and comfort
- Provide cows with fresh grass and air
- Work closely with the veterinarian
- Don't let milking routines ruin the cows
- Think and manage the operation — work wisely
- Place the best, most skilled people in the correct positions
- Rely on customer operations, including sales and service, as sources of help
- Can your business operate without you? Do you have a backup plan?

"Your own destiny is in your own hands, in many cases," he said. Estate planning, Shirk noted, begins not when you are fading out of the business, "but when you enter into the business."

Speakers also included Vinton Smith, extension dairy farm management agent, on overall dairy business performance; Nevin Dourte, Ruhl Insurance,

on crop insurance; and Bruce Kreider, White Oak Mills, on nutrition strategies to increase profits.

More information from Dairy Days is scheduled to appear in the April 19 *Foraging Around* section of *Lancaster Farming*.

Miller Resolution Recognizes Future Farmers

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Pennsylvania celebrated FFA Week recently under a resolution sponsored by Rep. Sheila Miller (R-129) and approved by the House of Representatives.

"It is because of organizations like FFA that train our future farmers and state leaders that agriculture remains the top industry in our commonwealth," Miller said. "This organization makes a positive impact on the lives of thousands of students by encouraging cooperation, promoting good citizenship, and inspiring patriotism."

The focus of this year's FFA celebration is "The Cornerstone of Success," which illustrates how the organization's programs are building tomorrow's leaders and preparing them for the challenges of the future.

Formerly known as Future Farmers of America, the state organization was chartered in 1929 and has approximately 8,000 members in 147 chapters. The nationwide membership of FFA is more than 450,000.

The national organization dates back to 1928 when, during the National Livestock Judging Contest, 33 students from 18 states joined together to establish the organization with the goal of providing leadership training for farm boys.

Girls were admitted to membership in FFA starting in the 1960s, and today they make up

more than a quarter of the organization's membership.

FFA has associations in all 50 states, as well as in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

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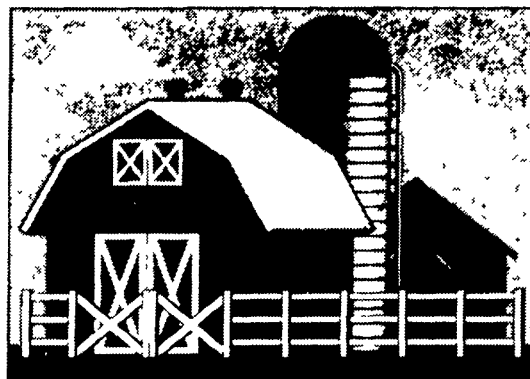
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Saturday, March 22, 2003

Starting Time - 8:00 AM; Real Estate - 12:00 Noon

Furniture - 1:00 PM

Located at :156 Central Manor Road, Mountville, PA, Lancaster County
Directions: From Lancaster, PA go West on Route 30 to Mountville Exit Go South (2 traffic lights) to square in Mountville Turn right on Main Street Continue 1 block to South Manor Street and continue to auction site West Hempfield Township, Lancaster County, Zoned Rural/ Agricultural

FURNITURE & APPLIANCES: "Country" 2- Blnd Door Cupboard w/Gray & Red Paint w/Bracket Feet, Cornice Molding, Interior having 6-shelves w/2 Miniature Drawers "Unusual" 32-Drawer Wooden Hardware Bin w/ Upper Shelving, Finch-Fine Furniture (Federal Style) Dining Room Suite w/ Buffet, Server, China Closet, Table w/Boards, (6) Chairs w/Rope Style Turnings (Mint Condition), 3-Pc Hepplewhite Living/Parlor Suite - Small Loveseat, & (2) Side Chairs, Swell Front Sheraton Dresser w/4-Drawers & Oval Brass Pulls, 5-Pc Maple Bedroom Suite, Cane Seated Rocker, 5-Drawer Oak Chest-of- Drawers, Drop Leaf Table, Oak Kitchen Cabinet w/ Baking Area & Upper Display Unit, 2-Drawer Over 2-Door Tall Jelly Cupboard, "Nice" Dove-Tailed Grained Bracket Feet Blanket Chest, (6) Oak Painted Farm Chairs, Oak Library Table, Oak Towel Rack, Gate Leg Table, Metal Top Kitchen Table (1930's Era), Quilt Rack, (6) Decorated Plank Bottom Chairs, Washstands, Cane Seated Ladder Back Chair, Cane Seated Chairs, 4-Leg Table w/Drawers, "Nice" Marble Top Dresser w/Tear Drop Handles, Dome Trunk, Lane Cedar Blanket Chest, Double Wooden School Bench, Cherry Dove-Tailed Baby Cradle, Child's Desk, Child's Stool & Chair, Child's Wicker Chair, Oak Chifferobe w/Side Drawers, Plant Stand, Desk, Wooden Barrels, Miscellaneous Chairs, Metal File cabinets, PFAFF Sewing Machine, G E Refrigerator (Like New), G E Freezer, G E Washer/Dryer, Microwave, Magistic Floor Model Radio, Philco Recorder Player w/Records

GLASSWARE: Small Mocha Cream Pitcher, Earth Worm Pottery, Approx 3- 1/2" w/Hair Line, Nippon, Austria Jam Jars, Creamer/Sugar, Tea Set, Fiesta Juice Set & Mixing Bowls, Lobster Dish, Butter Dishes, Candy Compote, Pink & Green Depression Glass, Cherry Pattern, Miss America Covered Candy Dish, Cake Plates, German & Vegetable Dishes, Fostoria Bowl, Toenail Goblets & Various Other Goblets (Some Early), Opalescent Glass, Salt & Pepper Shaker, (N) Purple Carnival Glass Bud Vases, Aurora Decorated Plates, (2) Majolica Plates - Berry/Leaf, Historical Blue Covered Sugar Bowl, German Relish Dish, Weller Flower Vases, (4) German Cake Plates - (1) Nippon, Gothic Flo Blue Plate, Decorated Ironstone Cups & Saucers (Paradise), Fancy Cups & Saucers, Turkey Hill Tumblers, Cranberry Glass, Adams Saucers, Noritake Open Compote, (2) Hull Vases, Sherbets, Parfaits & Water Goblets, Harker Pottery Covered Pot, (2) Deft Creamers, Chelsea Ironstone

ANTIQUES & HOUSEHOLD ITEMS: 1839 Catharine Reed Show Towel, Oak Mission Shelf Clock, "Rare" (2) Early Photo Albums of World War I (Black & White), Central Manor Camp Meeting Books, Flat Iron, Box Camera, Bennington Type Piggy Bank, Iron Kettle w/Tripod, Ice Cream Freezer, Black Eyed Susan, Market & Other Baskets, Approx 30-40 Hawthorne, Keystone, Cowden Crocks & Jugs, Butter/Market Scales, Pea Scales, Egg Scales, Individual Salts, Deitz Lanterns, Good Collection of Unusual Picture Frames, Handmade Soap, Metal Child's Wagon, Milk Cans, Meat Grinders, Cookie Cutters, Early Baby Bottles (Non-Rolling Oval Nurser), Baby Clothes, Juicer, Early Ink Well, Dough Scrappers, Apple Butter Sturs, Tin Pie Plates, Cast Iron Still Bank, Tin Banks & Tin Toys, Small Cast Iron Hubley Car, Various Porcelain Baby Dolls, Children's Games, Miniature Child's Toy Dresser, Cast Iron Military Men, Lunch Kettles, 1962 Pontiac Bonneville Promotional Car, Collection of Decorated Eggs, Braided Oval Rugs, "Good" Navaho Indian Rug, Table Linens, Campaign & Tin Buttons, Frosted 1/2 Shade Table Light w/ Tree Truck Base, Bull's Eye Mirror w/Eagle, Wall Paper Mache Boxes, Sterling Candle Sticks, Fire King

FARM RELATED EQUIPMENT: Farmall Super A Tractor w/Sickle Bar Mower, Plow, & Cultivator, Model 1315 Cub Cadet Lawn Mower, Small disc & Spring Harrow, Campbell Hausfeld Air Compressor, Snapper Walk Behind Lawn Mower, Walk Behind Potato Plow, Wooden Step Ladders & Extension ladders (12'-30'), Wheel Barrow, Chicken Coops, Animal Traps, Animal Hide Stretching Boards, Single & Double Hole Corn Sheller, Belt Drive Corn Sheller, Chicken Equipment/Feeder, Rolls of Wire, Cast Iron Corner Troughs, Scalding Trough, Hand Cultivators, Dung Sled, Tobacco Lathe, Straw Cutter, Steel Wheel 2-Row Corn Planter, Ladder Jacks, Echo Gas Weed Eater, Battery Charger, Hand & Garden Tools, Berry Boxes.

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