

New Livestock Evaluation Center

(Continued from Page A1)

ly the size of our current bull barn," he said. "Not to mention the 100 feet by 200 feet gravel lots with mounds.

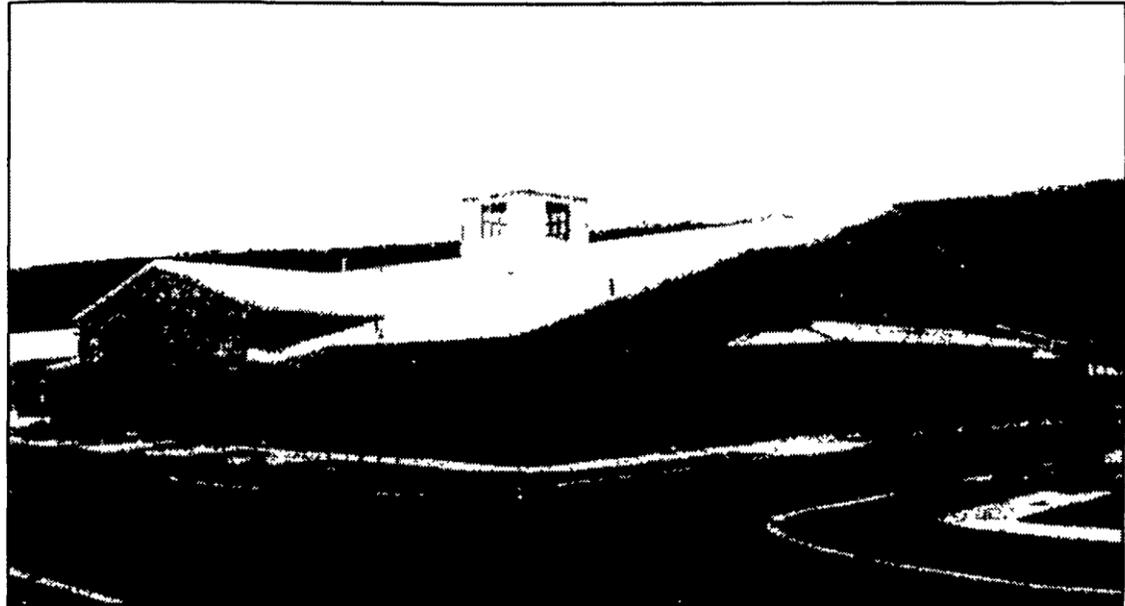
"Relatively speaking, these pens could hold a lot more beef cattle than the 30 bulls we are projecting for each pen."

Bull test capability will increase from 76 to approximately 150 bulls, boars from 60 to 144 boars, and rams from 80 to 300 rams.

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"We tried to design and build a facility with a great deal of flexibility and utility to it," says Glenn Eberly, Livestock Evaluation Center director.



The new \$6.4 million center is 10 times larger than the current facility operated by the PDA.

Heat Stress Management A (Cool) Breeze

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from California, about six hours away. "Experts think of us as a part of California," Thompson said.

The Stotz vision: "Holsteins between the cacti," Thompson noted.

This past week, the temperature stood at 86 degrees. "For eight months out of the year, we have gorgeous weather," he said. But in the summertime, temperatures can rise to 125 degrees.

Average rainfall in Arizona is six inches per year. The state has experienced a four-year drought. "We had five inches in February this year," he said. One storm recorded 2.25 inches of rainfall in February.

Arizona has 135 dairy operations with an average herd size of 1,030 cows. That qualifies them as number one in the nation in herd size, noted Thompson.

In 2001, Arizona was sixth in the nation in production per cow, with an average of 20,679 pounds of milk per cow per year. Ninety percent of the dairy producers are members of the United Dairymen of Arizona. The cooperative, growing at rate of 5 percent each year, operates a quota program, which encourages members to adjust production to market needs.

The operations produce more than 3 billion pounds of milk per year, the majority of Arizona's fresh milk and dairy product needs, including much of the hard cheese and butter demands, and some cultured dairy products. Holsteins make up 91 percent of the state herds, with the rest predominately Jerseys. The remainder are Brown Swiss, Guernseys, and Milking Shorthorn. Eight percent of the cows in the state are registered.

Also at the conference, Tom Shephard, Agri-Edge, Inc., a busi-

ness development subsidiary of DairyLea Cooperative, spoke about the role the business plays in economic development.

Shephard noted that the "2-In-10" Rule applies to businesses such as dairying. He noted that out of 10 years, two will have significant profits, two will have some growth, four will hold their own, and two have potential losses.

He explained ways in which farmers can work together in ways to secure capital needs for expansion. Even a brand-new dairy, looking at a 600-cow herd size, will invest about \$1.1 million in cattle and equipment and \$2.2 million in a facility. That \$3.3 million will require equity of about \$1.4 million to get started. "It's a tough nut to crack," said Shephard.

Jim Vincent, president of L-Brooke Farms, Inc., Byron, N.Y., spoke about his 7,000-acre western New York operation, including 450 fields and 12 full-time employees, a business with four partners.

Vincent spoke about the strengths to be found in partnering and working together to ensure the viability of agriculture. The farm includes 2,500 acres of process beets, carrots, sweet corn, and other crops. In addition, they grow 800 acres of wheat, 2,200 acres of corn, 1,000 acres of alfalfa, and 800 acres of soybeans.

Vincent spoke about the need for proper formal buyer-seller arrangements in the partnering, limited liability corporations, and how he helped devise "unconventional, creative ways to finance a 2,500-cow dairy using our modeling techniques," he said.

Also, when forming a business arrangement, have an exit strategy prepared from the beginning. "Don't do one without the other," Vincent said.

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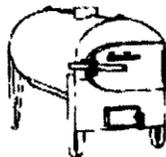
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