

Crowd Smaller But Enthusiastic For Rescheduled Dairy Day

CAROLYN MOYER
Bradford Co. Correspondent
ATHENS (Bradford Co.) — The crowds were a bit smaller and some exhibitors could not come, but that didn't stop many Bradford County farmers and industry representatives from learning and sharing at the 2003 Bradford County Dairy Day. Conducted at the Harlan-Rowe Junior High School in Athens, the event was rescheduled for Saturday, March 29, after a major winter snowstorm forced organizers to cancel the event, which is usually conducted in February.

"We served over 300 lunches," said Bradford County Dairy Agent Gary Hennip. "The num-

ber was down from what we had expected in February, but we were pleased. Most of the exhibitors were able to come. We had over 50 exhibitors."

Dr. Ken Bailey, associate director of dairy marketing and policy with Penn State University, served as the key speaker for the event.

"He spoke about why the price of milk is where it is, and he was able to do it in a positive way," said Hennip. "The bottom line is that it's still a situation where demand is relatively soft and there are concerns about the war and other things. Dairy goes as the economy goes."

Also speaking at the event was Dr. Zhiguo Wu, Penn State as-

sistant professor of ruminant nutrition. He elaborated on his research on corn silage cutting height.

During his presentation, Wu summarized current research indicating that increasing the cutting height will increase the silage quality that will possibly compensate for the reduction in yields.

In other sessions, Tioga County Dairy and Agronomy Agent Craig Williams highlighted options for bird control on area farms. Penn State Agronomy and Water Quality Agent Mark Madden offered 1 core and 1 category credit for farmers who participated in his talk on understanding how adjuvants make herbicide applications safer.

The Bradford County Dairy

Princess and her court kept youth entertained with dairy trivia and games and manned the booth offering free ice cream and milk to all.

One highlight of the event was the annual pie auction that raised \$760 for the 4-H dairy program and the Dairy Princess program. Sixteen pies crossed the auction block. For the third year in a row, Morrissey Insurance purchased the high-selling pie. In all, they purchased two pies for \$180. Others who supported the event were all three Bradford County commissioners, McNeil Farm Service, Grange Mutual Fire Insurance Co., C&N Bank, East Smithfield Hardware and several individuals including Hennip and Bradford County 4-H agent Tom Ma-

loney.

"They made me pay \$55 for my wife's pie," said Hennip with a laugh. "But it was worth it, because it forced Tom Maloney to buy his wife's pie for \$45."

During the event, visitors could also take advantage of free hearing checks and blood pressure screenings.

"We found nine individuals with some hearing loss," said Hennip. "The screenings are good because they give you an idea of what you have."

In all the extension staff agree that the day was successful.

"We were pleased with the turnout," said Hennip. "We also want to thank the Athens School District for all their help and the use of the school."

What Are The Priorities Of Cuban Ag?

BRIAN SNYDER
Centre Co. Correspondent
HAVANA, Cuba — The following list of current initiatives was presented to the Food First delegation by Luis Garca, an agronomist who is director of The Center for the Study of Sustainable Agriculture at the Agrarian University of Havana.

Entitled "The Cuban Model for Sustainable Agriculture," the list reflects challenges facing Cuba's farmers since the beginning of the current economic crisis, but serves also as a pretty good menu of priorities for sustainable farmers anywhere.

- Integrated Pest Management

- Organic fertilizers and bio-fertilizers
- Soil conservation and recuperation
- Animal traction and alternative energy
- Intercropping and crop rotation
- Mixing crops and animal production
- Alternative mechanization
- Urban Agriculture and community participation
- Alternative Veterinary Medicine
- Adjusting to local conditions
- Reverting rural emigration
- Increasing cooperative use of land

- Improving agrarian research
 - Changing agrarian education.
- Extension Services**
- A key to the success of sustainable agriculture in Cuba has been the reinvention and rejuvenation of university extension services.
- Throughout the country, extensionists, as they are called, adhere strictly to a model of "popular education" that is described as "emancipatory" in nature. By this model, the teacher is never considered more important than students, but both learn and share in the process together.
- The principle goal of extension services in Cuba is to integrate

new technology with the traditional knowledge of farmers, in support of traditional production systems.

Farmers are thought to be the best judge of what to produce and how it should be done. As one extensionist put it, "What the farmer would not eat, the farmer should not grow."

Intensive Vs. Extensive Agriculture

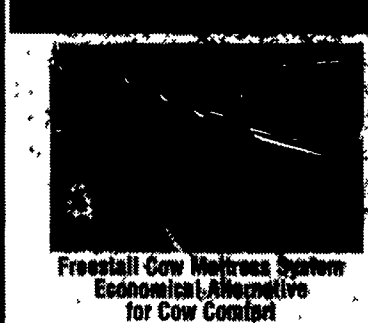
Of the many interesting perspectives gained from listening to farmers and other agricultural specialists in Cuba, one of the most intriguing was the concept of "extensive agriculture."

Cubans use the term "intensive" to describe industrialized systems of agriculture that are very familiar to us in the U.S., like confined livestock feeding

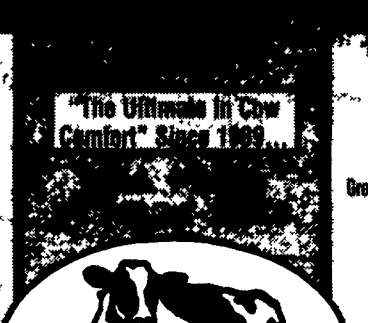
operations and monocultural cropping practices that depend heavily on chemical inputs.

But in describing the alternative, Cubans talk about "extensive" systems that consist of vast networks of sustainably run, smaller plots of ground that emphasize cooperative labor, local marketing, farm-based enterprises, and a farm's inherent responsibility to the social fabric of its community.

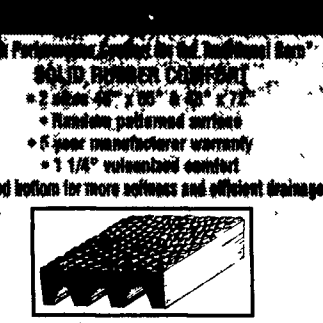
In contrast to intensive agriculture, extensive agriculture represents an altogether different philosophical orientation. Cubans use the word "extensive" to emphasize how big their plans for establishing sustainable food and farming systems really are.



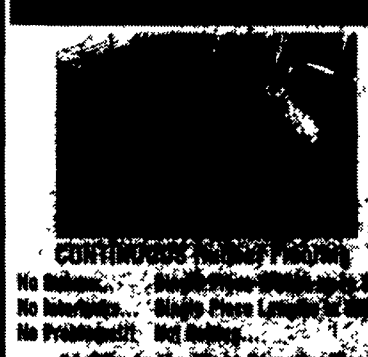
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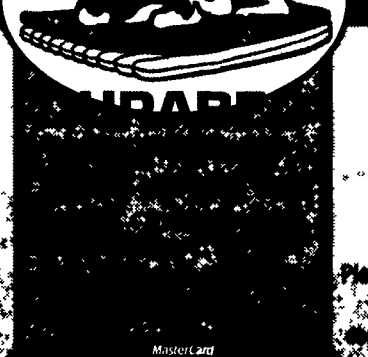
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