

# Bunt Praises Farmers' Anti-Bioterrorism Efforts

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Chairman of the House Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee Rep. Raymond Bunt (R-Montgomery) gave a thumbs up to the Commonwealth's agricultural industry as members have taken added steps to protect the state's livestock and crops.

"Signs of bioterrorism can come in many forms," Bunt said. "By farmers and agricultural workers educating themselves about dangers and preventative measures, we are saving time, money and a possible disaster if an act of terror should occur here in Pennsylvania."

Farmers are changing their farming practices by tightening how livestock graze, placing new animals in quarantine, wearing disposable boots, using correct handling procedures and quality assurance methods, and placing locks on buildings that house animals.

Members of the dairy industry have introduced a new safety procedure that allows milk tanker drivers to attach a tamper-resistant plastic seal with a number on the top of the tanker opening. The driver then writes the number in the manifest, and delivers the load to the processing plant. There, workers check the seals and compare corresponding numbers. Busted seals or mismatched numbers could result in the entire load of milk being discarded.

"These safety seals are an excellent form of protection, and they don't hinder or slow drivers from completing scheduled stops," Bunt said. "This is a low-cost way to protect consumers and the dairy industry."

Bunt said consumers would not see any increase in costs for the new safety measure at their local grocery store. The Mary-

land and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative made the switch to protective seals two months after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Regional officials from agriculture, emergency planning and other agencies have been working hard since before Sept. 11 to prepare for deadly outbreaks such as foot-and-mouth disease.

Agencies and organizations including veterinarians, state police, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, county extension officers, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, as well as representatives from the Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA) and the United States Department of Agriculture, have been meeting regularly to discuss what actions and safety measures should be implemented to protect our nation's agricultural security.

Since the terrorist attacks,

these agencies have met periodically to expand their focus to include more foreign animal diseases, bioterrorism and other agricultural issues.

Some ways to prevent or control disease outbreaks include:

- Limit access to farm to one gated road, and keep gate, and all unused buildings locked at all times.
- Control rodents and birds that may live in barns, especially feed rooms.
- Monitor visits and visitors, and do not take visitors to livestock areas or barns unnecessarily.
- Train employees to recognize common disease signs and patterns.
- Wash hands after being in livestock areas, use clean overalls and disposable boots or rubber boots (clean and disinfect rubber boots after each farm visit).
- Isolate all new animals.
- Call veterinarian immediately if unusual illness or signs of disease are found.
- Avoid transfer of dirt, mud

or manure by vehicles, and closely watch vehicles carrying livestock at all times.

In addition to the added shipping protection, Pennsylvania's agricultural community has taken several steps to protect livestock and vegetation grown for public consumption since the events of Sept. 11 and a near breakout of foot-and-mouth disease.

In addition to farmers learning about ways to keep their livelihood safe, 4-H students and Future Farmers of America (FFA) members have begun learning about biosecurity measures.

"The life of the farmer has drastically changed," Bunt said. "Now we need to teach the farmers of tomorrow how they can protect their future."

The state legislature took significant steps during the 2002-2003 session to aid farmers in the protection of crops and livestock, with the passage of a bill to provide for criminal and civil penalties for crop destruction.

## Veneman Chooses Members Of New Advisory Committee

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman recently announced appointments to the new Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture. Appointees will serve one- or two-year terms, and may be reappointed to serve up to six consecutive years.

"This committee will take a forward look at agriculture biotechnology and will serve as an important resource as USDA addresses emerging issues related to this field," said Veneman. "I am pleased that these individuals have agreed to provide their time and expertise to serve on this committee."

The committee is charged with examining the long-term impacts of biotechnology on the U.S. food and agriculture system and providing guidance to USDA on pressing individual issues related to the application of biotechnology in agriculture.

The Committee is composed of 18 members from 14 states, the District of Columbia and Mexico. The members represent the biotechnology industry, the seed industry, farmers, environmental and consumer organizations, academia and international plant re-

search centers, the food industry, product shippers and traders. The appointments were published in the Federal Register April 14.

Patricia A. Layton, Professor, Department of Forest Resources, Clemson University, South Carolina will serve as Chair of the Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture.

The other members of the Committee are: Daryl D. Buss, Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin, at Madison, Wisconsin; Leon C. Corzine, Farmer, and Chairman, Biotechnology Working Group, National Corn Growers Association, in Illinois; Carole Cramer, Professor, Virginia Tech, and Chief Scientific Officer, Crop-Tech Corporation, in Virginia; Richard T. Crowder, Chief Executive Officer, American Seed Trade Association, in Virginia; Michael D. Dykes, Vice President, Government Affairs, Monsanto Company, in Washington, D.C.; Juan C. Enriquez-Cabot, Director, Life Sciences Project, Harvard Business School, in Massachusetts; Randal W. Giroux, Staff Scientist, Cargill, Inc., in Minnesota.

Also, Duane Grant, Farmer

and Member, National Association of Wheat Growers and U.S. Wheat Inc. Biotechnology Committee, in Idaho; David A. Hoisington, Director, Applied Biotechnology Center and Bioinformatics, International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), in Mexico City, Mexico; Gregory A. Jaffe, Co-Director, Biotechnology Project, Center for Science in the Public Interest, in Washington, D.C.; David C. Magnus, Assistant Professor, Center for Bioethics, University of Pennsylvania, in Pennsylvania; Terry L. Medley, Vice President, Global Regulatory Affairs, DuPont Agriculture and Nutrition, in Delaware; Margaret G. Mellon, Director, Food and Environment Program, Union of Concerned Scientists, in Washington, D.C.; Ronald D. Olson, Vice President, Grain Operations, General Mills, in Minnesota; Jerome B. Slocum, Farmer and General Manager, North Mississippi Grain Company, in Mississippi; Keith C. Triebwasser, Manager, Product Safety and Regulatory Affairs, The Procter and Gamble Company, in Ohio; and Lisa W. Zannoni, Head, Global Regulatory Affairs and Government Relations, BASF Plant Science, in New Jersey.

## State Hereford Association Leadership Gathers In Kansas City

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — On April 12, 29 state Hereford association leaders convened in Kansas City for the first State Officer Leadership Workshop sponsored by the American Hereford Association (AHA).

State leaders joined the AHA Board of Directors and staff for a day filled with idea exchanges that proved to be productive and educational.

Round table discussion groups were formed addressing questions about recruiting new members, state priorities and working with state cattlemen's associations to promote the breed.

Dr. Bob Kropp, Oklahoma State University, moderated the event.

Dr. Dan Moser, AHAs Animal Breeding Consultant from Kansas State University, addressed the attributes of the Hereford cow, giving the association leaders exciting information to use in their promotion of Herefords at the state level.

After much research, Moser concluded, the ability of the Hereford cow to thrive in tough conditions and return pregnant

year after year proves to be the biggest asset the breed has to offer the commercial cow-calf industry.

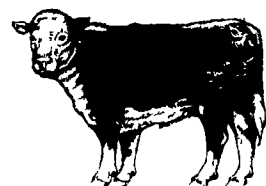
Moser's most exciting finding was based on results from the USDA Germplasm Evaluation Program conducted at the USDA Meat & Animal Research facility in Clay Center, Neb.

USDA found that the Hereford females produced the highest pregnancy rate when compared to all other breed groups. Hereford females expressed a 96 percent pregnancy rate compared to 86 percent for Angus, 87 percent for Red Angus, 91 percent for Simmental, 78 percent for Gelbvieh, 83 percent for Limousin, and 94 percent for Charolais.

Part of the conference was spent learning from successful state association leaders. Jack and Lyn Chastain, Texas Hereford Association, Kay Morgan, Nebraska Hereford Association and JoAnne Rogers, Texas Polled Hereford Association, shared with other leaders some of their experiences they face in their associations and how they work to promote Herefords in the state.

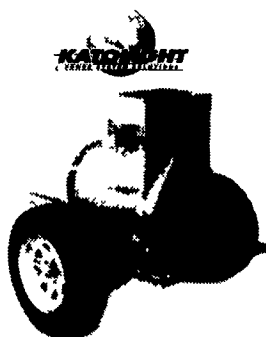
Chastains discussed trade show promotion and in their monthly publication. Morgan and Rogers gave an overview of coordinating and printing a monthly state newsletter and told of the benefits of a communication piece like this to inform the membership.

Johnny Woolfolk, Tennessee Hereford Association, Tom Granzow and Tom Krauss representatives from the Kansas Hereford Association, shared with the members what is involved in hosting a successful state feeder calf sale.

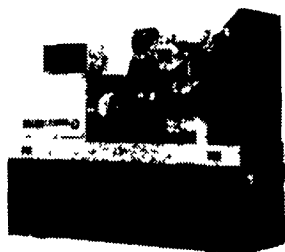


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