

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

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a year ago. Most of this increase has come from Australia (up 68 percent) and New Zealand (up 69 percent). Did you know that so far this year we've imported 3,854 metric tons of casein from India? We've also imported casein from 18 different countries including Belarus, China, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine.

This "least input cost" syndrome runs rampant in this country. It affects our labor costs, it affects all levels of industry, it affects nearly every business at every level.

With weakening dairy prices, with imports affecting the price received by farmers, we are looking at new ways for farmers to bolster their income.

Just this week we attended the well-run Penn Allied Nursery Trade Show at the Fort Washington Expo Center in Fort Washington. The event is produced and coordinated by the folks at the Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association in Harrisburg.

About 12,000 landscape and nursery managers, retail green industry representatives, and others attended the event. The trade show, covering about 225,000 square feet, hosted 1,100 exhibitors at 650 exhibits. It's a \$3.1 billion regional industry.

Are there outlets for dairy farmers through these tough times? Sure, but it may lay entirely in direct marketing. Many of them have already engulfed themselves in looking beyond their own industry to the green industry, which has shown phenomenal growth.

Interesting note: the tobacco industry in this state has all but died. Marc Tosiano, state statistician, reports in his NASS column this issue:

One item of national interest is that all harvested tobacco acres is estimated at 413,710 acres, down 3 percent from both the 2002 crop and 1 percent below the March Intentions report. *If realized, this would be the lowest harvested acreage since 1874.*

Let's keep an open mind about new technologies and new industries in these trying, changing times.

Bongards' Creameries Purchases Perham Cheese Plant

ARDEN HILLS, Minn. — Bongards' Creameries and Land O'Lakes, Inc. announced Bongards' Creameries purchase of Land O'Lakes Perham, Minn., cheese manufacturing facility. Terms of the sale were not disclosed.

"The sale reflects significant effort on the part of Land O'Lakes to find a buyer for the Perham facility," Fernando

Palacios, Land O'Lakes vice president, operations and supply chain, dairy foods said. "We are pleased to have found a buyer in Bongards' Creameries, who will keep this business operating in the community."

Roger Engelmann, general manager of Bongards' Creameries, said, "Bongards' Creameries has extensive experience in the manufacturing of natural

and process cheese products in the state of Minnesota. We are excited about the opportunity of re-opening a dairy plant in our state. The Perham facility has had a wonderful reputation for its cheese and the whey products manufactured there. We believe this will open many new doors for Bongards' Creameries. We anticipate a solid working relationship with the City of Perham, its residents, Land O'Lakes, and Minnesota's dairy producers."

Bongards' Creameries (www.bongardscheese.com) was established in 1908 as a dairy cooperative of family farmers. Bongards' is recognized as an industry leader in meeting the changing needs in the consumer, food service, and industrial cheese and whey markets. Last year, Bongards' reached \$163 million in sales.

Angus Producers Elected To Beef Improvement Federation Leadership

LEXINGTON, Ky. — S.R. Evans Jr., Greenwood, Miss., was elected Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) president at the BIF Annual Meeting, May 28-31 in Lexington, Ky. Evans takes the position after serving as the organization's vice president.

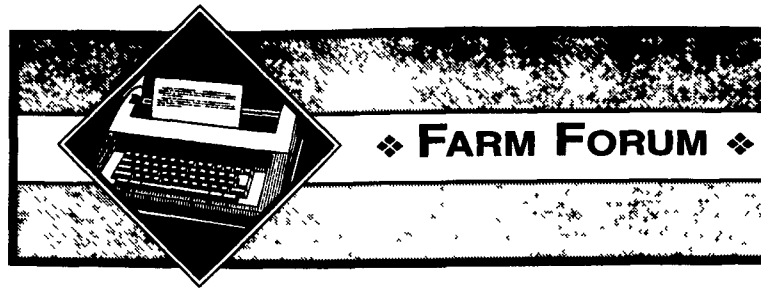
and methodology and to create greater awareness, acceptance, and useage of beef cattle performance concepts.

For more information about BIF or its recent annual meeting, log onto www.bifconference.com.

Evans, who has been raising registered Angus cattle since 1971, brings a wealth of knowledge and commitment to the organization. He was presented the Continuing Service Award at the 2002 BIF meeting.

Richard McClung, manager of Wehrmann Angus, New Market, Va., is the outgoing president.

The Beef Improvement Federation was formed as a means to standardize programs



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potentially cost farms thousands of dollars." One grower in particular is facing \$231,990 worth of penalties for 229 violations.

Today's farmers and growers need a reliable, cost effective, and easy way to keep their pesticide and farm records. NSIA, Inc., a

company that focuses on providing computer and software solutions to the agriculture, horticulture, and turf industries has free information available (call (800) 270-0047) on this subject. There are software programs available today that ease the time and effort required to keep good production and work records, including pesticide records. The company is a trusted reseller for FarmWorks and AgVance software, products that automate the keeping and posting of farm records, including herbicide and insecticide application. Their Website, www.nsia.us, offers more information on

these innovative solutions.

"Our product allows farmers, growers, and custom applicators to easily keep accurate records of pesticide application so that they are able to monitor the security of their workers and adhere to EPA requirements," said Campfield. "These records are vitally important in avoiding government

finances, and in documenting a farmer's care of the environment from which they make their living. Good records also help a grower make better decisions and strengthen the farm business in other ways." The agricultural industry is rapidly adopting computer technology, with surveys showing more than 45 percent of growers now using computers and/or the internet in their daily operations. Campfield attests that many farmers are now turning to laptops or pocket PCs instead of the paper notebooks.

— Marty Campbell
NSIA, Inc.

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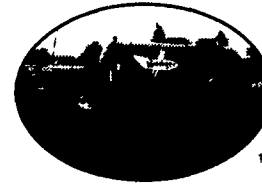
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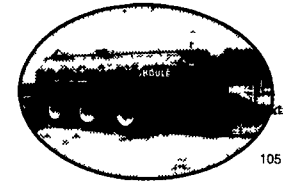
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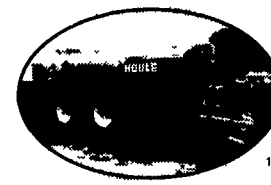


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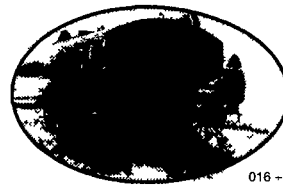


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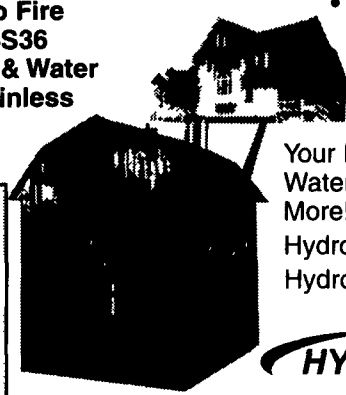
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