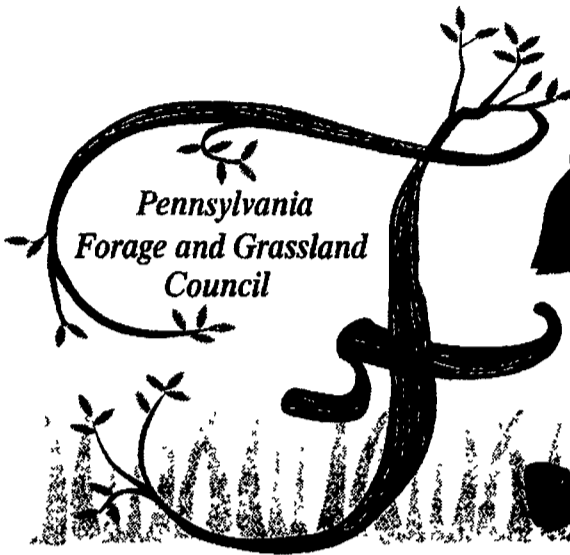


# SPECIAL

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 ISSUE

Industry, Farmer, Scientist - Working Together Toward A Sounder Grassland Program



# Grazing Around



## 2003 PFGC FALL NEWSLETTER



John Roche is one of two Irish brothers who will share views on untapped grazing potential at the PFGC Grazing Conference March 5 and 6.

### Pennsylvania Forage And Grazing Conference Set For March 5 & 6

#### Irish Brothers, Genetic Researcher On Slate

GRANTVILLE (Dauphin Co.) — This year's Pennsylvania Forage and Grazing Conference will take place March 5 and 6 at the Holiday Inn in Grantville.

This conference has something for forage producers and graziers at all levels of experience. The conference is sponsored jointly by the PFGC, the Pennsylvania Grazing Research and Education Center, Pennsylvania's Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, and Penn State Extension.

The first day of the conference kicks off with brothers John and Tom Roche. John works as a grazing researcher/consultant in New Zealand, and Tom manages Zealoud, and Tom manages the home dairy farm in Ireland. These brothers have recently been exploring the possibilities of starting a grazing dairy here in the U.S. Over the

course of the conference they will discuss "hands on" experiences as well as differences, similarities, and opportunities of grass farming in the U.S. and around the world.

Other talks on the first day will include topics such as animal genetics for grazing (sure to stimulate discussion), effectiveness of equipment to speed hay drying, keeping and using accurate farm records, large rectangular bale storage and marketing, and health concerns of animals on pasture.

Dr. Steve Washburn from North Carolina State University will be leading the discussion on animal genetics for grazing. The evening of the first day will include discussion sessions between attendees and speakers.

The second day of the conference starts with a look at grazing and family life, in

fact of the Farm Bill and now regulations on forage and grazing farms, and pasture maintenance. Presentations include recognizing the challenges of grassfed beef, farmer health concerns, and farm liability. The day continues with a presentation by the Roche brothers on grazing opportunities in the Northeast. The conference will conclude with a brief "wrap up" session and awarding of door prizes.

Producers will give many of the presentations during the two-day conference.

The PFGC will conduct its annual reception and awards program Wednesday evening followed by informal discussions with the day's presenters.

The conference will also include a trade show with com-

(Turn to Page E2)

#### DAVE LEFFVER

Lancaster Farming Staff

OLEY (Berks Co.) — Nevin Mast has been crossbreeding

Holsteins and Jerseys for

about 10 years.

"I just like the cross so

well," the dairyman said during

a pasture walk on his organically certified farm last

September.

Mast hosted about a dozen

farmers who were interested

in seeing his grazing operation.

Joining the group was

Mena Hautau, Berks County

extension agent, and Dr. Steve

Washburn, a dairy researcher

from North Carolina State

University.

Grass and hay are the main

source of feed for the 50 cows

on Mast's 110-acre farm. He

supplements milking cows

with 12-14 pounds of grain

per day. Heifers between their

first calving receive no grain.

Advantages of the

Holstein/Jersey cross include

easier breeding and calving,

hybrid vigor, and greater survival,

according to Mast and Washburn.

"The biggest gains are in

the survivability traits," said

Washburn who studies the

benefits of crossbreeding in

dairy herds. He predicted that

dairy herds will have an in-

creasing impact on commercial

dairy production in the

future.

Washburn is one of the

speakers slated for the upcoming

Pennsylvania Forage and

Grazing Conference scheduled

for March 5 and 6 in

Grantville.

A typical average first-con-

ception rate for purebred Hol-

steins when using artificial in-

semulation is between 30 and

40 percent. In crossbreeds,

that number can reach nearly

50 percent, according to

Washburn.

Washburn said dairy farm-

ers need to have a plan when

it comes to crossbreeding. The

plan should include research-

ing the fertility of the daugh-

ters of bulls used in the cross

breeding program, and

knowing the bulls' production

data. While hardiness and re-

productive traits are impor-

tant, production must be a

primary goal.

As Washburn put it, "Milk

still pays the bills."

In crossbred cows, produc-

tion levels tend toward the

higher-producing breed, he

noted.

While Jersey and Holstein

genetics make up the main

part of the gene pool on

Mast's farm, he also enjoys

experimenting with different

types of crossbreeding. For ex-

ample, Mast said he recently

purchased a White Park bull

to breed to some of his heifers

(Turn to Page E7)



Nevin Mast discusses his crossbreeding program during a pasture walk on his Berks County dairy farm last September. Dr. Steve Washburn, one of the presenters set to speak at the upcoming PFGC conference, joined the group of graziers on Mast's farm.

### Project Grass Expands, Pushes Ahead

#### Graziers Can Apply For Cost-Share Funds

DAVE LEFFVER

Lancaster Farming Staff

STATE COLLEGE (Centre

Co.) — Project Grass is on the

move.

Last year, the grassroots,

grassland management group

expanded to include every re-

gion of Pennsylvania, and has

been at work developing new

programs to foster grass-based

farming and conservation

practices in the state.

Last November marked the

first-ever Project Grass Con-

ference. More than 100 people

attended the two-day event at

State College.

The conference included

presentations on the history of

Project Grass — first formed

in Southwest Pennsylvania in

1980. Research findings on the

economic and environmental

benefits of livestock grazing

(Turn to Page E4)

## Forage Varieties

- Poultry Pasture Research
- Haymaking and Grazing Info
- PFGC, AFGC Info
- Hay Show Awards From Ag Progress

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