

2003: A Year Of Big Changes

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The wet weather brought planting and harvesting challenges as farmers scrambled to get seeds in the ground between showers, and later contended with soggy harvest conditions. High winds also complicated harvest, with Tropical Storm Isabel flattening cornfields in some areas.

Meanwhile, farm milk prices began to climb out of a long slump, market cattle prices broke records, and fourth quarter egg prices rose to about 70 percent higher than a year ago.

A lot happened in the public agriculture arena this year as well.

Following are some month-by-month highlights:

January

The much heralded 86th Pennsylvania Farm Show was launched in the newly expanded facility. An estimated 800,000-900,000 people attended the weeklong expo, which offered new incentives for the agricultural community, including three Farmer Days.

During the Farm Show, new Governor Ed Rendell announced Dennis Wolff, a dairy farmer from Columbia County, as the state's new secretary of agriculture. Wolff pledged to work for the well-being of all Pennsylvania farmers.

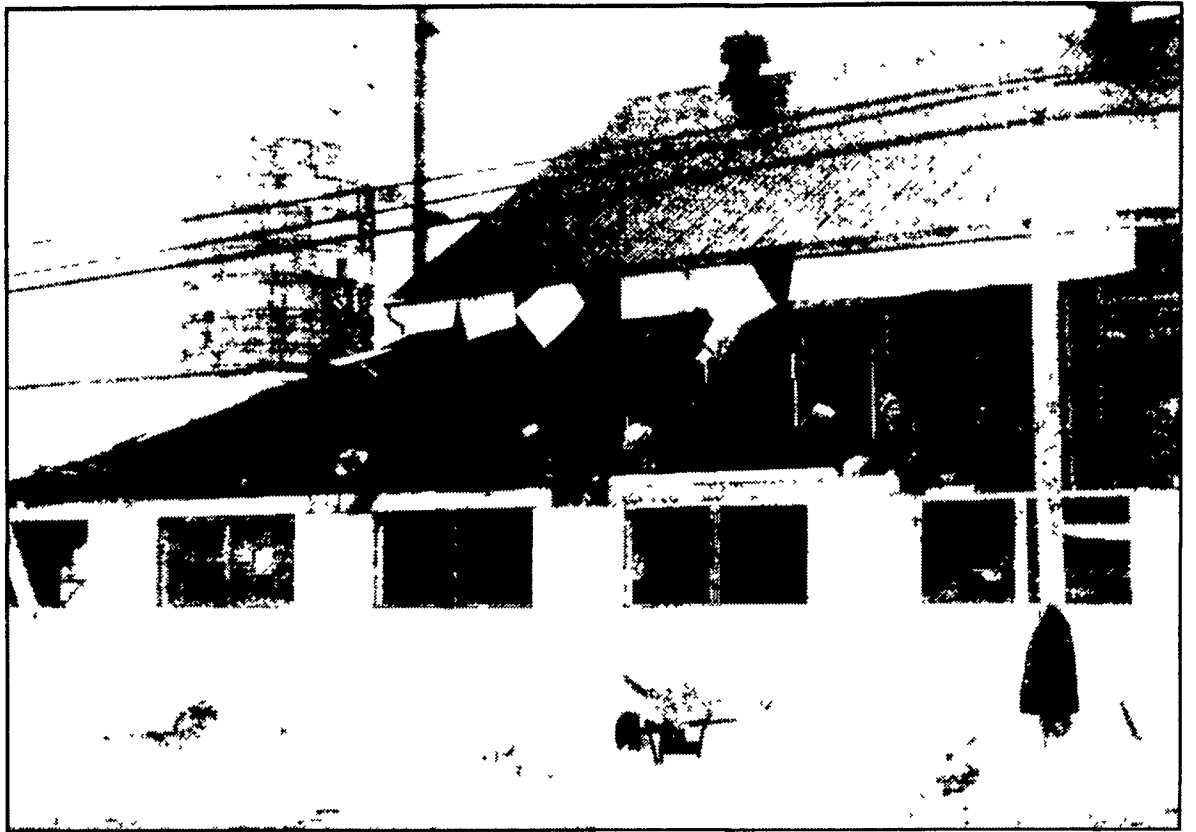
February

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) became a hot topic locally, as cattle feeders met with a USDA representative in Lancaster to discuss the issue.

"True Security" was a theme at the annual Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture conference. Keynote speaker Mark Ritchie spoke on the insecurities created by the loss of small farms and local food supplies in the U.S.

Presidents' Day brought the biggest snowfall in years to the region, with accumulations ranging from 20-30 inches. Volunteers gathered at the Jonas Glick farm, Leola, to quickly rebuild a dairy barn roof that collapsed from the snow. Milk haulers throughout the area worked overtime to serv-

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After the President's Day snow blizzard in February, more than 50 volunteers gathered quickly to rebuild the dairy barn roof on Jonas Glick's farm, Leola. The roof collapsed when snow from the higher roof slid onto the lower one, which was already weighted with snow. The cows "all walked out with scratches," Glick said.

Photo by Michelle Kunjappu

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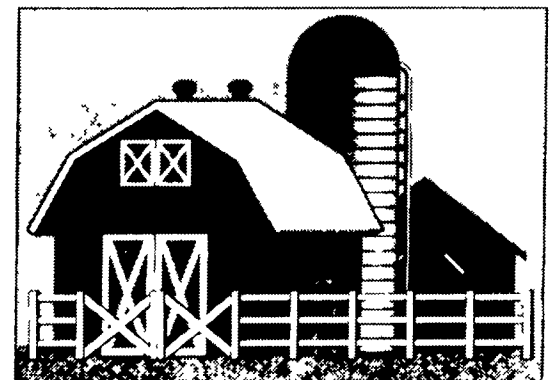
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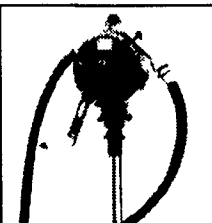
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