

NEWSLETTER

HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

VOL. 17, NO. 3

MAY, 2008

HOWIE FEAGA, PRESIDENT, (410) 531-1872;

MERHLYN BARNES, SECRETARY, (410) 489-4465;

DONALD BANDEL, TREASURER (410) 531-7918;

ALLAN BANDEL, NEWSLETTER EDITOR, (410) 489-7875

WEB SITE - www.howardfarmbureau.org

Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

The May Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast is scheduled for **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 8, 2008** in the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Please join us.

Our guest speaker will be **Mr. Jerry Fischer** with the Maryland Department of Agriculture. He is in charge of the Office of Apiary Inspection for the State.

Honey bees are an often over-looked, yet a very important component of the Maryland, and the national, agricultural scene. Honeybees play a critical role in the pollination process of many important agricultural crops. But, is the honeybee industry still healthy, or is it under a serious threat? What is the status of the mysterious colony collapse disorder (CCD) that we frequently read about in the news? In addition to informing us of the responsibilities of his office, Mr. Fischer has been asked to give us the current status of CCD as well as discuss the importance of honeybees to agriculture in Maryland and Howard County.

We hope that you will make an effort to be present for this very important and informative program. Bring your spouse, and/or a friend. Enjoy the food, the fellowship and a lively and friendly exchange of information. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. and the program will begin at 8:30 a.m.

Please RSVP by noon, Tuesday, May 6, by calling either Charlotte Mullinix, at (410) 489-4510 or Martha Clark at (410) 531-3455. The cost of the breakfast is \$10.00 per person, payable at the door.

The formal part of the program will conclude by 9:00 a.m. We look forward to seeing you on **May 8** at the Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

President's Message

by **Howie Feaga, President**
Howard County Farm Bureau

I hope everyone had a great Easter. It certainly came early this year. And how about that time change coming so early?. We are soon going to be in the fields at full go. I hope that we will all be careful. It's so easy to get in a rush. That's when accidents happen.

This spring has been a dry one, but maybe by the time this newsletter goes to print we will have caught up on spring rains. We definitely do not need another drought this year.

Our membership committee, Susan Baker and Shelly Buhlman, are doing a great job with trying to recruit new members to keep our organization strong and in an effort to help make our laws work for us. It was gratifying to have a good turnout at our Annual Legislative Dinner on April 10. I hope that everyone present got a chance to ask the questions that they wanted to ask – and got the answers too.

It has been one year on the job for me now as your president. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all they have done to help me with the responsibilities that the office entails. I especially want to thank Merhlyn Barnes, our County Farm Bureau Secretary. She is always right on top of things. And your Farm Bureau Board of Directors has been very willing to quickly step up to each task. For their enthusiasm, I am very grateful. And last, but not least, I want to thank you, the members, for your great interest in this organization. It has meant a lot and has ultimately been what has kept us all going.

Well that's it for now. I hope everyone has a wonderful spring and like always, "Keep your plow in the ground. We're all pulling for you."

Maryland Farm Bureau Women
Annual Spring Fling

The Maryland Farm Bureau Women will hold their Annual Spring Fling on Friday May 16th in Annapolis.

Plan to arrive at the Naval Academy Stadium at 10:00 a.m. The day will officially begin (10:30-11:30 am) with a tour of the Governor's House (Please bring your driver's license). At noon, we will enjoy lunch at the Phillips Seafood Restaurant (choice of crab cake or chicken breast sandwich).

From 1:45 until 2:40 p.m., we will be aboard the Harbor Queen for a narrated cruise of historic Annapolis Harbor and the banks of the U.S. Naval Academy.

The cost for the day's tour, lunch and cruise is \$25.00 payable to MD Farm Bureau. **Registration deadline is May 5th.**

Conservation Security Program
by Jim Myers, USDA-NRCS
District Conservationist
Howard SCD

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service announced that the Conservation Security Program will be available within the Gunpowder/Patapsco watersheds. The sign-up for the program will be from April 18 to May 16. This sign-up includes parts of Howard, Carroll, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, and Harford Counties.

The Conservation Security Program, or CSP, is a federal program that is designed to reward those farmers that have been doing a good job with conservation. The program was authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill and has been available in different watersheds each year since 2005. In Maryland, the program was established for the Monocacy and Sassafras watersheds in 2005. In 2006, the Choptank and Nanticoke watersheds on the Eastern Shore were involved with the program.

A public meeting was held in Westminster on April 15 about the program; however, it isn't too late to learn about the program to see if you qualify. You should contact the local NRCS field office by May 16. To reach the Woodbine Field

office and the Howard Soil Conservation District, call 410-489-7987. The Westminster Field Office can be reached at 410-848-6696, ext 3. The Woodbine Field Office is located in the Lisbon Shopping Center.

* * * * *

No Till Drill and Pasture Planting
Demonstration

A no-till drill demonstration for pasture operators was conducted on March 15, 2008 at the University Research Farm on Folly Quarter Road. On that Saturday, 46 farm owners or operators attended. People came from as far as the Maryland Eastern Shore and Bedford County, PA. The event was a joint effort of the Maryland Cooperative Extension, Howard and Montgomery Soil Conservation Districts, USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the University of Maryland. The event covered many aspects of pasture management which must be understood in order to better ensure success.

The event started with a discussion about pasture management by Dr. Les Vough, former University of Maryland forage specialist and Mr. Elmer Dengler, NRCS state grazing specialist. They discussed the broad spectrum of growing forages to include fitting the species to the site conditions and soil type, managing grazing heights according to the species of forage, and the need to be aware of weather effects on forage management (i.e. drought in 2007).

For renovating or establishing a pasture, Dr. Vough and Mr. Dengler began with the need to have a current soil test. These soil test results will let one know the liming and fertilizing needs of the pasture. The liming should be completed at least 6 months before seeding in order for the lime to have a chance to react in the soil. Fertilizer needs can be provided by many different arrangements. Livestock manure may be part of the fertilizer mix so a nutrient analysis of the manure is helpful to balance the applied nutrients. Any chemical fertilizer must balance the nutrients given by manure and any nitrogen provided by legumes in the stand.

Then the drill demonstration began - the highlight of the day!! There were four drills of various sizes and makes on display. Representatives from each company were on

hand to discuss the features of the individual drills. Drills demonstrated included Kasco, Frontier, and Truax. Kasco had two drills on display that were designed for smaller farms. These drills had widths of four and six feet. They have 8 ft available also.

The Truax drill was an older model that is actually owned by USDA, NRCS and is kept at the Plant Materials Center in Beltsville. (It is available for free to farm operators in Howard County who may need to plant something through one of the USDA programs.) The Truax rep had literature available for newer models and explained the many features on the displayed drill. The Frontier on display was a model that is used by a landscaping company. Its difference is that it broadcasted the seed and rolled it in to get the seed-to-soil contact.

Though the soil was a little moist for planting, the seeding was completed and there was time for inspecting the planting. Participants could investigate the seeding depth, rate, and uniformity. These plantings will be monitored throughout the year and another field day will be held later in the year to review the success of the plantings.

The committee who put together this field day would like to thank the vendor representatives for attending. We also would like to thank all of the people who took advantage of the beautiful late winter morning for a unique learning experience. The event provided the novice with vital information for obtaining a successful pasture and gave the veteran pasture manager a much needed review of the many aspects of pasture management.

For those who are interested in improving their pasture management or interested in pasture renovation, please contact the Howard Soil Conservation District at 410-489-7987. The District can help customize a plan to suit your operation's needs.

Weed Control Coordinator

The Maryland Department of Agriculture wants everybody to know that there is somebody to contact if you see a problem with noxious weeds in Howard County. Noxious weeds include the various thistles such as Canada thistle, bull

thistle, musk thistle, plumeless thistle, and nodding thistle. Also Johnsongrass and shattercane are on the list.

The worst weed in recent years has been Canada thistle which quickly invades reforestation areas and fields planted into conservation cover under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). It is extremely invasive since it can reproduce by seed and by rhizomes and its seeds are carried easily by the wind.

The contact is Gene Keller, Howard County Weed Control Coordinator. He can be reached at (301) 788-7781. He is available to work with farmers, homeowner associations, and other landowners in controlling these noxious weeds. He will assist with spraying at a nominal charge.

Tenant House Changes
by **Joy Levy**
Ag-Land Preservation Administrator
Department of Planning and Zoning

As many of you know, the Agricultural Land Preservation Program (ALPP) has been working with representatives of the agricultural community for over a year on potential changes to the regulations that govern tenant houses on property under ALPP easement. The effort was initiated through discussions with the Economic Development Authority's (EDA) Agriculture Committee. Conceptually, the committee wanted to address two major issues: the eligibility of part-time farm employees for tenant housing and the potential for abuse of tenant house rights in the absence of guidelines for tenant house size.

As a result of the collaborative effort with the committee, the ALPP introduced legislation last fall to amend the agricultural preservation section of the County Code to allow part-time employees to be eligible for tenant housing and to give the Agricultural Land Preservation Board (ALPB) the authority to review tenant house requests for appropriate size. Members of the ag community expressed their concern to the County Council that the amendments as proposed would change the contracts that property owners signed with the County without their consent, and would give the ALPB review authority that was too broad. Although there was

also support for the proposal, the measure failed.

Subsequently, the ALPP consulted with farm community representatives regarding an alternate proposal to amend the Zoning Regulations to limit tenant house size to 2,500 square feet, a change that would have affected all tenant houses, not just those on land in preservation. Some people expressed support for this approach as a more equitable way to regulate tenant houses. Others felt that the County should not try to address an ALPP issue by affecting property owners who are not in the program.

Based on the lack of consensus within the farm community about the best approach to address the tenant house issue, the County Administration and the ALPP staff no longer intend to propose any changes to the laws or policies affecting tenant house rights at this time.

What's New in Ag Preservation
by Joy Levy

The ALPP is very pleased to announce that the County purchased agricultural preservation easements on two high quality farms in 2007-- Calvin Murray's 166-acre property in Mt. Airy settled in July, and Thomas Grimes's 52-acre property in West Friendship settled in October.

The ALPP also acquired dedicated agricultural easements on 180 acres in 2007, mostly as "sending parcels" in our Density Exchange Option program.

As of the April 1, 2008, the County has 20,390 acres under ag easement.

Ag Preservation Reminders
by Joy Levy

The Howard County Agricultural Land Preservation Board (ALPB) generally meets on the second Monday night of each month at the Howard County Fairgrounds. The ALPB reviews all requests for lot releases, dwelling locations and other issues pertaining to land under easement. A property owner should submit a letter and map detailing their request to Joy Levy

no later than two weeks prior to the meeting date.

ALPB meeting agendas and staff reports are now available on the County's website at www.howardcountymd.gov/DPZ/Agricultural/agboardagenda.htm

Any original grantor of a "pre-1993" Howard County agricultural easement should confirm with Joy Levy that a Letter of Intent has been completed and is included in the ALPP's permanent property file. The Letter of Intent protects the grantor's rights to child lots in the event that the grantor dies prior to the lots being released from the easement. The ALPP will honor the grantor's wishes that her/his named children are entitled to child lots through the settlement of the grantor's estate only if the grantor has expressed their intent in writing. The ALPP has a form for this purpose.

For any questions about the ALPP, please contact: Joy Levy, Administrator, Agricultural Land Preservation Program, Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043, (410) 313-5407, or email jlevy@howardcountymd.gov

Caring Alone
by Timothy S. Barkley, Sr.
JD, CFP, CSA
Attorney at Law

In our last article, we discussed caring for your children in your estate plan. By employing a trust in the will, parents can ensure that their values in relation to money and its worthwhile use are transmitted to their children.

Parents caring alone for their children confront all the same issues, with variations on the theme. Parenting alone comes in an endless variety of shapes and sizes, traditional and avant-garde, intentional and otherwise. Unless a third party is available to care for the children in your absence, though, planning in any case becomes more urgent and the needs more immediate without the luxury of assuming that the other parent will make provision later.

As mentioned in the last article, available on the Web from the author at www.barkleylaw.com, divorced parents should strongly consider the

use of a trust and appointment of a trusted trustee to ensure that money intended for the children is not diverted by an ex-spouse or his or her new partner. While divorced couples occasionally retain enough trust and confidence in each other to leave the other parent as the trustee of the trust for the children, such a situation is rare.

On that note, divorced or separated couples must avoid using the children as pawns in their own struggles to establish or reestablish their own sense of worth and value after a breakup. The dissolution of an intimate relationship can damage the self-esteem of the parents, who often seek validation from the children – “Your other parent might think I’m unsatisfactory, but you love me, don’t you? More than him/her?”

Close on the heels of this difficulty is the use of young children as communication intermediaries. Parents who can’t talk amicably sometimes use the children as “messengers.” This is a devastating burden to their progeny, who now feel the weight of their parents’ suspicion and conniving and can feel responsible for it. Children can also be tempted to misconstrue intentionally what has been said in order to gain power over the parents.

While this office refers divorce and domestic matters to qualified counsel rather than providing such services directly, we see enough single-parent situations to know how devastating it is to children caught between their parents. After the death of one parent, this difficulty can persist as extended family, often embittered by the conflict between the parents, seeks to influence the child’s affections.

For the sake of the children, many couples maintain at least an outward display of amicability, never denigrating the other parent in front of the children and supporting the child’s relationship with both families. Those efforts, often at great cost both emotionally and monetarily, are to be applauded.

In your planning, then, unless the other parent is abusive, God forbid, be sure to provide that your children maintain ties with the other parent and the extended family of that parent, whether he or she is living or has passed away. Depending on who you choose as trustee and as guardian of your children, you might need to implement specific language in your will and power of

attorney to pay for visitation with grandparents and other relatives from the other family.

On a practical note, this will lessen the fear of the other parent’s family that they will lose contact with your children, whom they love and cherish. This, in turn, will lessen the possibility of a contest of your will.

Be sure that your will includes these important provisions so that your children will know your love when you are no longer there to assure them of this truth.

Third Annual Ten Oaks Cup Polo Match

Presented by the Dr. Fred C. Lewis Family, the 3rd Annual Ten Oaks Cup Polo Match will take place on Saturday, June 7, 2008 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at 6005 Ten Oaks Road, Clarksville, MD. Gates will open at noon.

First played in Persia in the 6th century B.C. and later formalized and popularized by the British in the 19th century, polo has sometimes been referred to as “the sport of kings”. The fast-moving modern version of polo is played by two opposing teams of mounted horsemen who swing a mallet in attempts to hit a 3 to 4-inch ball through the opposing team’s goal.

The Ten Oaks Cup Polo Match is being played to benefit Catholic Charities Our Daily Bread, a charity that for more than 27 years has provided daily meals to Baltimore City’s homeless and working poor population.

For more information about this exciting event, including sponsorship opportunities, admission, etc., please contact: Mr. Dennis Murphy, Our Daily Bread Employment Center, 725 Fallsway, Baltimore, MD 21202. (443) 986-9027.

Annapolis, Living History by Delegate Gail Bates

It is a joy and a privilege serving in the Maryland legislature. When I was a child, I fell in love with the beauty of the historic district of Annapolis as well as the quaint harbor. Sometimes I pinch myself as I walk through the Maryland State

House, remembering such people as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson who also walked through this magnificent building.

Toward the end of the Revolutionary War, the State Capitol served as capital to our new nation. The Continental Congress met there from November 26, 1783 to June 3, 1784. It was in this building that the Treaty of Paris was ratified, ending the Revolutionary War. It was in this State House that George Washington resigned his commission as commander in chief of the Continental Army on December 23, 1783.

In our 2007 Legislative Session, we participated in a memorable ceremony in which the handwritten original of Washington's resignation speech was unveiled. Amidst colonial fife and drum, color guard, colonial singers and a Washington impersonator, we were transported to a simpler time and place. Dr. Edward Papenfuse, the State Archivist, described the event of the resignation. The colonial legislators kept their hats on while Washington spoke and only removed them when he returned to the chamber as a civilian. This established the orderly transfer of leadership, a model for the world.

Our State House is now closed for renovations and needed repairs. It is the oldest state house in the country still in legislative use. Officials have been constantly monitoring the old water pipes to be sure they do not break and flood the basement before they could be replaced. In addition to pipe replacement, women's rest rooms will be installed on the lower level.

On the main level, the wall between the "Silver" room and the Calvert room will be removed to allow for re-establishment of the old house chamber. Currently the old senate chamber is being refurbished to what it looked like in the 1780's. The brick walkways throughout the State House grounds are being replaced. Visitors will have to settle for an outside view of the building until inside work is completed; hopefully, in time for the 2009 legislative session.

One of my favorite experiences in the State House has been climbing the stairs between the inner and outer wooden domes to get to the "cat walk" around the top. On a very clear day, you can see the Eastern shore from up there. After all, it is the highest point in Annapolis. On the way up and down the stairs it is fun to read the

names and dates of other visitors in the form of old and new graffiti.

When the renovations are complete, I would be happy to host you in exploring what I call "Williamsburg alive". Come down and experience history with me. I continue to be an enthusiastic tourist and would love to share it with you.

New Ag Marketing Web Site
from ***Mastering Marketing***
Spring, 2008

Looking for information about alternative agricultural and natural resources enterprises? Working on your marketing plan and need help with product pricing? There is a new web resource that provides timely information on such topics as value-added products, sustainable marketing opportunities, information for new and beginning farmers, and a host of links and resources for agricultural and natural resources entrepreneurs.

While many articles, publications, and links have already been posted, the site is still under development. Through an on-line survey on the site, you can contribute suggestions for additional materials and topics. Your input is valuable and appreciated.

Please visit <http://agmarketing.umd.edu>, browse the site, complete the brief survey, and bookmark this site for future reference.

2008 Fair Contests

Miss Howard County Farm Bureau
Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau
Future Howard County Farmer

With the advent of Spring, the Women's Committee is springing into action for this year's contest. The committee will be meeting at the end of April to initiate plans. The contest participation requirements will not change, and we anticipate another great group of contestants for each of the contests. We have received very positive feedback on the Little Miss and Future Farmer Contests, and expect the number of

participants in these two events to actually increase.

All Farm Bureau members can assist the women's committee with this annual event, by giving us any suggestions or comments, which we will consider at our planning meetings. Even better, if you are aware of any Howard County youth who meet the requirements for either of the contests, please promote their participation, and have them (or you) contact any of the committee members for entry forms and rules. You may contact: Annette Fleishell, Committee Chair via email at: fleishellfarm@aol.com or phone at: (410) 795-6119.

* * * * *

Miss Howard County Farm Bureau

Sunday, August 3, 2008 - 3:00 PM
Show Ring

CASH AWARDS and GIFTS TO ALL
PARTICIPANTS

Sponsored by the Howard County
Farm Bureau Women
Chairperson – Annette Fleishell
(410) 795-6119

RULES

- Ages 16-19, and must be single
- Family must be Howard County Farm Bureau Member
- Contestants shall submit application to Committee
- Howard County Farm Bureau Women have the right to decide final eligibility
- Former winners are ineligible
- All contestants must abide by Rules of Score Cards
- Decision of the judges is final

* * * * *

Future Howard County Farmer and Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau

Sunday, August 3, 2008 – 3:00 P.M.
Show Ring

Intermission of Miss Howard County Farm
Bureau Contest

CASH AWARDS to ALL PARTICIPANTS
AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIPS
to WINNERS

Sponsored by the Howard County
Farm Bureau Women
and
Howard County Young Farmers

Chairpersons – Annette Fleishell
(410) 795-6119
email: fleishellfarm@aol.com
Dawn Watkins (301) 253-2921

RULES

- Boys and Girls, ages 8–11, as of August 1, 2008
- Family must be a member of the Howard County Farm Bureau as of the date of the contest
- Contestants shall submit an application to the committee, providing information regarding their involvement in agricultural, school and community activities
- Contestants must belong to 4-H, or participate in an agricultural activity. These could include gardening, food and nutrition, home economics, or animal project
- Howard County Farm Bureau Women have the right to determine final eligibility
- Each contestant must create a poster about their agricultural project to be displayed throughout the fair
- Winners will be announced during intermission of the Miss Howard County Farm Bureau Contest
- Dress for the contest is "Sunday Best"
- Decision of the judges is final

Dairy Farming in Howard County in the Early to Mid-20th Century by Allan Bandel

Not too many years ago, dairy farming was a very popular occupation and a highly satisfactory way of life for many Howard County farm families. Obviously, the "face" of the county has changed significantly over the last 40 or 50 years. The county then was much more rural than it is today with many livestock and dairy

farms “dotting” the landscape. Dairy farming itself has also changed significantly since the time that my parents began “milking cows” in the mid-1930s. The Bandel family was in that business for over 40 years. Even though the dairy cows required almost endless personal attention, 24/7 in fact, during its heyday, most dairymen considered the business to be a very rewarding, respectable, and satisfying “way of life”.

Our family did not operate a large dairy herd compared to those that remain, and are even necessary, today. But we did have what was then considered an average sized herd of milk cows for a family operation. When Dad first started dairying (he and Mother doing all of the milking by hand initially), his rather small renovated stanchion barn (originally built to house draft horses) could only accommodate about a dozen cows. When he retired from dairy farming in the early 1970s, his herd had increased to between 40 and 50 milk cows (plus approximately that same number of young stock). Today though, unlike the situation that existed 60 or 70 years ago, it would be very unlikely that a family could maintain the comfortable standard of living that we enjoyed then if they were still working with comparatively modest animal numbers such as that.

During the 40 plus years that the Bandel family was in the dairy business, several significant changes took place on our farm. Our dairy barn, for instance, was expanded from a modest 12 stalls to eventually 36 stanchions, and finally to a modern loafing barn with a three-stall Surge milking parlor. The parlor was equipped with a stainless steel pipeline to carry milk directly from the cow to a bulk tank cooler in the adjacent milk house, the latest “cutting edge” way of doing things at the time. In the very early days, before health regulations finally prohibited the practice, raw milk was bottled and sold directly off the farm. During most of those 40 years though, milk was shipped to a commercial dairy in Baltimore, first in those heavy 10-gallon milk cans, then finally, in a bulk tank truck. Let’s review some of the more significant changes that took place.

Until the early 1940s, our dairy barn didn’t offer the luxury of a milking machine to help ease the work load. Not many years out of the Great Depression, milking machines were still pretty much a novelty, or luxury item, on Howard County farms back then, and few dairymen in the

area had yet acquired them. Our first milking machine came straight out of the Montgomery Ward mail order catalogue. Although ordered from the catalogue, the equipment was obtained directly from Montgomery Ward’s huge main store on Monroe Street in Baltimore. Dad brought it home on the back seat of the family car and installed it in the barn himself.

Our first milking machine was memorable because of its unusual design. The vacuum principle upon which it operated was very similar to today’s modern machines. The model that Dad purchased was made for milking cows in a stanchion barn. But it was of an unusual design. This unique model was configured to milk, not one, but two cows simultaneously. What a wondrous machine.

This two-cow feature proved to be a little tricky at first because cows are creatures of habit, and our cows, like most, were accustomed to being milked only from one side – their right side. The new milking machine had two sets of four teat cups attached to a single pulsator mounted on a five-gallon stainless steel bucket. The unit had to be placed between the two cows. This meant that one of the cows was milked from the traditional right hand side, but the other one had to be milked from the left. Some of the more “skittish” animals tended to be a little nervous about being approached from the left and sometimes “lashed-out” with a swift kick at the individual attempting to attach the teat cups, often sending milker parts (and victim) flying into the bedding (or worse). This made milking time a somewhat exciting experience at first, at least until the cows finally became accustomed to the new machine.

In the early days, before we started shipping Class 1 milk to a commercial dairy in Baltimore, most of our farm products were sold to customers on a market route that Dad had established in and around Catonsville, a suburb of Baltimore. Before the days of increasingly stricter State Health Department regulations, the sale of raw milk and raw milk products was very popular with his customers. These products were an important source of family income.

During his market route years, Dad sold milk, cream, butter, poultry, fruits and vegetables to his city customers. Installed in our farm’s small dairy building adjacent to the barn, was a bright red and silver hand-cranked, DeLaval cream

separator. Mother and Dad used this modern machine to separate raw whole milk into its two basic components, cream and skim milk. These mechanical devices operated on the principle of centrifugal force, taking full advantage of the difference in specific gravity between cream (fat) and skim milk (mostly water). Cream, which is the lighter fraction, contains about 40 percent fat. Skim milk is the heavier part, normally containing less than 0.1 percent fat.

Before the cream separator became popular, the favored method was to allow the milk to sit undisturbed for several hours allowing the cream to rise to the surface where it could be skimmed off with a dipper. Using the DeLaval invention, whole raw milk was poured into a large stainless steel bowl at the top of the separator. It was then allowed to flow slowly by gravity into a rapidly spinning drum (6,000 to 9,000 rpm). The centrifugal force generated inside the drum forced the more dense skim milk to the outside. The lighter cream remained nearer the center. These two components then flowed off to separate containers by means of two strategically located delivery spouts.

At certain times during the year, usually in the spring when local farmers often had a surplus of milk, to meet the growing needs of his customers, Dad supplemented his own milk supply by buying extra milk from neighboring dairymen. Farmers who shipped their milk to a commercial dairy were paid a specified price for their milk, but only up to a certain pre-calculated production limit. This "limit" was known as the farm's base production. A dairy farm's base was established by averaging milk production over a specified period of months, usually in the fall or winter.

In the spring, when cows were turned out to fresh pastures and most of the new calves were born, milk production increased significantly. It was during this period that dairy farms usually produced a greater volume of milk and thus were likely to exceed the established base for their farm. This extra milk was classified as "surplus" by the dairies. The price that the dairies paid for surplus milk was significantly lower than what they paid otherwise. Dad, who sold milk directly to his market route customers, could afford to pay his neighbors a few cents more per gallon than the lower price the dairies were offering for surplus milk. This provided the neighbor with

some extra income and Dad still made a small profit for himself.

One of our neighbors had a small herd of Guernsey cows. Milk from Guernseys (sometimes referred to as "Golden Guernsey") is well known for its high butterfat content. When available, Dad processed some of this rich Guernsey milk through his cream separator, then bottled and sealed the cream into sanitized, glass milk bottles. He then sold the bottled cream, along with jugs of whole raw (unpasteurized and unhomogenized) milk, butter, chickens and other farm products on his weekly market route. Since bottles were scarce and expensive, customers were encouraged to return the bottles each week so that they could be cleaned, sanitized and reused. Any left-over skim milk was not wasted either. It was fed to the hogs, which they relished. Probably as a consequence, even in his later adult life when skim milk was considered to be a more healthy alternative to whole milk, Dad never did develop any taste for skim milk.

Butter was hand-churned on the farm using some of the excess cream. Before modern refrigeration, our milk products were stored in the cool water of a spring house about a quarter of a mile from the main house and barn. The small butter churn that we used held about a gallon of cream. Inside was a set of wooden paddles that were spun rapidly by hand-turning a crank. After spinning those paddles for a period of time (it seemed like hours, but in reality was probably no more than 15 or 20 minutes), the globules of butterfat would begin to coagulate and form larger and larger chunks. Eventually, most of the butterfat would coalesce into a big sticky yellow chunk of butter. The butter to be sold was pressed firmly into a rectangular wooden form that produced about a one-pound block.

It wasn't after too many years though (in the late 1930s or early 1940s), before much stricter State Health Department regulations were enacted – and enforced. Thereafter, Dad was prohibited from marketing these farm-processed dairy products unless he changed the manner in which they were prepared and stored. One day a State Health Department inspector, apparently having been tipped off, showed up at the farm. Not long afterwards, Dad received a formal letter with an official seal informing him that if he planned to continue marketing dairy products

from the farm, he must spend several thousand dollars (a fortune back then) installing a pasteurizer and modern bottling and sanitation equipment, etc. With a slow projected pay-back on such a large investment, Dad obviously, had no choice but to cease marketing raw milk from the farm.

It was quite clear that the huge monetary expenditures required in those days for a small farm operation to upgrade its dairy processing equipment was simply not cost effective. Shipping whole raw milk to a commercial dairy in Baltimore was then the only practical alternative if our family farm were to remain in the dairy business. Subsequently, Mother and Dad made any necessary changes to conform to the new Maryland Health Department requirements, stopped selling raw milk products directly to consumers and began shipping all of their milk production to one of the large commercial dairies in Baltimore.

In Maryland, it is now illegal of course, to sell unpasteurized raw milk or raw milk products directly to the general public. Bovine tuberculosis, for instance, can be transmitted to humans quite easily in raw milk. Cows and milk today are regularly tested for TB, and any positive reacting animals must be immediately removed from the herd.

Most of the country is now free of bovine tuberculosis. But, forty or fifty years ago, this was far from the case. Some of the historic old photographs that we occasionally find, often in old textbooks or encyclopedias, may show a milkman delivering bottled milk from door to door. The deliveryman sometimes is "stoop-shouldered", a posture approaching that of the famous Hunchback of Notre Dame. This "stooped" posture was a typical symptom of long-time tuberculosis infection, a malady that had settled in the bones of the spinal column. Although still a potential health hazard, health regulations today are more stringent than they once were and the general public no longer needs to worry about this potential health hazard.

Dairy farming was once very widespread in Howard County. Dairying was a respected occupation and a productive way of life in what was once a much more rural place to live. Through the first two-thirds of the 20th century, there were more than 50 family-owned dairy

farms in the county. But the pressures exerted by rapidly encroaching urbanization and the increasingly unfavorable economics associated now with the smaller herd sizes of the past have reduced the number of Howard County dairy farms today to less than one-tenth of what it once was.

Some would argue that this trend is simply a sign of progress. But many of us who grew up on dairy farms during that wondrous era would argue just as strongly that a large part of a valuable and memorable part of our agricultural heritage has been removed from Howard County's verdant, once bucolic, landscape. Evidence of much of that by-gone era is now largely relegated to the far less exciting printed black and white printed pages of recorded agricultural statistics and perhaps recent high school history books.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2008

- May 3 **Spring Plowing Field Day and Demonstration with the Maryland Draft Horse and Mule Association.** Land preparation for corn planting. Living Farm Heritage Museum Grounds. West Friendship, MD. (Rain date – May 10).
- May 3 **A Day of Racing at Pimlico.** The Maryland Horse Breeders Assoc. And Maryland Cooperative Extension invite all Maryland 4-Hers. 9:00 am until end of day's racing. Reservations were due April 11.
- May 3-4 **Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival.** Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD.
- May 8 **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 am. Howard County Fairgrounds Dining Hall, West Friendship, MD.
- May 12 **Howard County Agland Preservation Board Meeting.** 7:30 pm. Fair Office, Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. Contact: Joy Levy at (4100 313-5407).

- May 13 **Pasture Walk.** 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Sullivan Farm, Bushy Park Road, Woodbine, MD. Contact: Kristal McCormick, Howard SCD, (410) 489-7987.
- May 15 **MAEF 20th Anniversary Gala.** 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm. Chesapeake Bay Beach Club. For details: call (410) 939-9030, or www.maefonline.com
- May 16 **Maryland Farm Bureau Women Spring Fling in Annapolis.** For details, see announcement elsewhere in this Newsletter. Registration deadline is May 5th.
- May 31 **4-H Horse Judging/Hyppology Contest.** Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Kristen Wilson (301) 596-9478.
- Jun 3 **Pasture Walk.** 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Virtz Farm, Westminster, MD. Contact: Carroll SCD (410) 848-6696 or Carroll County Extension (410) 386-2760.
- Jun 6 **Procrastinator's Conference for Commercial Pesticide Re-certification.** Contact: Chuck Schuster, (301) 590-2807.
- Jun 7 **The 3rd Annual Ten Oaks Cup Polo Match.** 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. 6005 Ten Oaks Road, Clarksville, MD. For more details, refer to announcement elsewhere in this Newsletter. RSVP by May 16, 2008.
- Aug 2-9 **63rd Annual Howard County Fair.** Exhibits, Displays and Demonstrations. Howard County fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD.
- Sep 11 **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 a.m. Dining Hall, Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. Speaker TBA.
- Oct 4 **University of Maryland CMREC Open House.** Clarksville Facility, Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD. For more

information or to offer suggestions, contact Frank Allnut at fallnut@umd.edu

[NOTE]: Some programs require pre-registration and/or a fee. For programs sponsored by Maryland Cooperative Extension, if you need special assistance to participate, please contact the person indicated at least two weeks in advance of the event.

Something to Think About – and Smile

With food prices seemingly escalating on a regular basis, the following story seemed appropriate:

A woman was overheard at the supermarket, "Our son and daughter-in-law came up with a foolproof way to save money on food. They bought themselves an economy car and then began driving it to our house for dinner."

And since income tax day, April 15, is now behind us, the following stories might offer us a little something to smile about now that the stress of this annual event is behind us.

The rural pastor received a call from an I.R.S. agent inquiring about a \$5,000 contribution claimed by a member of the parish. The investigator asked, "Did Mr. Roberts give that amount?"

The pastor thought to himself for a moment and then replied, "I really cannot say just now, but if you'll check back with me tomorrow, I'm sure that the answer will be yes."

And finally...

Conscience is the small voice inside your head that tells you the I.R.S. might check your return this year.

— from: *Country Chuckles, Cracks & Knee-Slappers*

Edited by Mike Lessiter