



QUITE A DAIRYMAN in her own right, Mrs. Herbert Royer, R5 Lancaster, helps with the milking in the farm's milking parlor. The milker pail is eliminated as the milk is piped directly into the can. (LF Photo)

Loose Housing, Milk Parlor Success Depends on Good Management

By Bob Best

One of the newest innovations, and one of the most controversial, in the dairy business is the use of the milking parlor and loose housing.

The practice was originated in California where the mild climate allows the cows to be outside all year round with a minimum of shelter. However it has now spread and been accepted throughout the country.

In Lancaster County the long barn with stanchions still is the favorite and is the practice recommended by the Pennsylvania State University. But some dairymen in the county have switched over to the new system.

Two of these dairymen are Her-

bert Royer, R5 Lancaster, and Isaac Brubaker, R2 Lititz.

Both say that they like the system, that they can produce high quality milk using it and that it is economical.

In Royer's case, economy in construction was the reason for going to loose housing and a milking parlor. He is a young farmer and started milking cows just a few years ago.

The barn on the farm is a conventional bank barn, but set up



THIS IS THE ARRANGEMENT in the milking parlor of Isaac Brubaker, R2 Lititz. Features to note are the sliding panels in front of the cow that serve as a gate

and feed trough, and the use of glazed tile on the walls to allow for easier cleaning. (LF Photo)

for beef cattle stabling and feeding. To house and milk dairy cows in the conventional manner, Royer would have had to remodel the entire ground floor, install extra lights and windows and seal the ceiling.

Instead, he built a combination two-cow walk through parlor and milk house. Of cement block construction, the cost of the new structure, built joining the old barn, was only a fraction of what a complete remodeling would have cost.

Brubaker had another reason for installing a milking parlor.

"My family has always handled the cows loose since we came on this farm more than 50 years ago. It's the only way I know how to handle cows," he said.

The reason for building the new parlor was the conversion to bulk milk handling combined with a change in milk markets. Formerly he had been selling milk for processing, but in the new

market, it was to be sold for Class I use.

The parlor is designed to handle four cows, two on each side of the operator. A single glass pipeline to the tank takes milk from all four milking stanchions.

Heating in the parlor is accomplished by use of thermo-pane windows and infra-red heat lamps. The walls are tiled where they can be reached by manure, thus making the cleaning problem much easier.

Outside the barn, the feeding lot is paved and a trench silo has been constructed adjacent to the lot. Brubaker said that controlled self feeding of silage has proved to be very successful.

Both farmers agreed on one point concerning loose housing of dairy cows. It takes bedding, lots of bedding, and good management to keep the cows clean and healthy.

But the advantage in the man-

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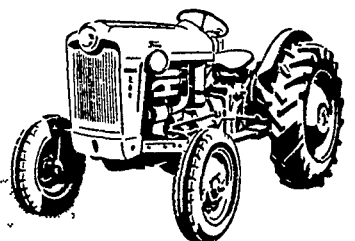
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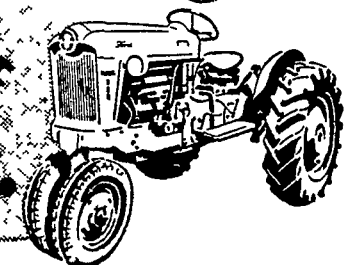
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