

● **Balmer**

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for the night. At six a.m. a switch acts to bleed off the pressure, the nest bottoms drop back into place, and the nests are open for business.

Other phases of automation used in this operation include automatic egg collection with continuous belts bringing the eggs to a central collecting point in the egg room three to four times a day. From here they are cased by the Balmers and stored in the egg cooler until they are picked up by the egg buyer three times a week.

Feed is moved automatically from the 17-ton bulk bin via the tube type feeder. From the tube it drops by gravity into a series of inverted cone-shaped hoppers which are spaced four to every ten lineal feet of tube.

Ventilation is controlled by nine fans along the back wall. Four of these are the cabinet type and five are booster fans. Air intake slots have been provided in the opposite wall and a few also in the wall housing the fans.

Two thirds of the floor area consists of one and one-half inch slats over a pit. All of the feeders and fountains are suspended over this area. For cleaning out after each batch of birds, this equipment is raised to the ceiling by winches, then a tractor with a blade or front-end loader may be used.

The 12,400 birds were bought as started pullets, and were housed just before Christmas. They were laying

10-15 per cent at that time. They have not peaked as yet, producing now at about 55 per cent.

This windowless house is 416 feet long by 40 feet wide. Sixteen feet of the length is used for egg room, cooler, and work area. The birds are concentrated at about one and one-third square feet each. Balmer plans a laying cycle of 14-15 months for this flock. So far the flock condition looks good and livability is very promising.

Mr. and Mrs. Balmer find they have to spend about six hours a day (combined) caring for this flock. Most of this time involves collecting and packing eggs, and closely checking the birds and the automatic equipment. On the home farm, meanwhile, they also tend another 2,000 layers and 40 cows and heifers. As if that weren't enough to keep them busy they rent another farm where 40 steers and some hogs are fattened. Although they tend the new lay in house by themselves, Balmer said, they do have some help on the other enterprises.

As one who had been "sold" on cages as a system for managing layers for quite some time, this observer will be very interested in following the Balmer floor-bird operation closely. After the laying year is completed, this flock might provide a good basis for a floor-cage, cost-return study.

FARM WOMEN #11 TOLD OF CENTER PLANS

At their regular meeting at Rhoads Spanish Tavern, Quarryville, twenty-eight members of the Society of Farm Women, Group No. 11, heard John H. Heir discuss plans for the proposed Lancaster County Farm & Home Center to be built in Lancaster Hill, a Director in the Farm & Home Foundation, showed the group an architect's sketch of the proposed center, and described the many needs such a center will fulfill.



A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF AUTOMATION shows the slatted pits that cover two-thirds of the floor area. The automatic feeders and waterers are hung over the pits. For cleaning out once a year, the feeders and waterers are raised to the ceiling by use of a winch, and the slats are lifted clear. Not shown is the continuous row of nests that line the walls. As soon as eggs are laid they roll gently from the nests to a covered belt that brings them to the egg room. L. F. Photo

● **F & H**

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of January 25 and the first progress report of results achieved was tabulated on Thursday of this week. No figures on the amount raised, to-date were released by Campaign Headquarters, according to Brubaker, since the first public announcement of funds raised is scheduled for the night of the Special Gifts Division launching of the drive, in the city area, February 15. The county-wide solicitation opened the campaign, with the Farm Gifts Division assigned a quota of \$250,000 to be raised as its share of the total objective.

In reviewing the first reports in the past week, campaign officials said that they were pleased by the large number of farm families and businesses which have either contributed or pledged gifts of \$100, or more, to the Farm and Home Foundation. Emphasis is being placed upon the need for gifts of this size, and larger, to assure attainment of the goal. In special booklets mailed to farm families, Directors of the Foundation point out that "contributors to the Farm and Home Center should bear in mind that this type of financial appeal will not recur for many years, if at all, therefore, gifts should be for the maximum individuals can afford to pay over a period of the next 24 months."

Refreshments were served by the hostesses Mrs. Jerome Rhoades, Mrs. Bess Ressel and Mrs. Harry McComsey.

The Group also heard Charles A. Ackey, Jr., describe how one's personality is reflected in their handwriting.

County continues to pile up ribbons at Farm Show; Frey in line for prize

HARRISBURG — The state farm show moved today with Lancaster County member — the Keystone Farmer Degree. agriculture prowess in REGIONAL SELECTION

Rohrer wins 7th Farm Show tobacco crown

HARRISBURG — An open-grained exhibit of wrapper tobacco won Roy M. Rohrer of Strasburg R1, his seventh grand championship in 27 years of Pennsylvania Farm Show com-

Quarryville youth named Star Farmer

Hess Bros. win 2 special egg awards

HARRISBURG — Hess Bros. Farms, Ephrata, won two special awards in commercial egg

11 County Girls Win Homemaker Degrees

This Space Made Available By
IVAN M. MARTIN, INC., Blue Ball
GLICK'S PLANT FARMS, Smoketown
S. H. GOOD, New Holland

It's a big "E" for EXCELLENCE...

Lancaster County Ranks First In The State In Agriculture

You can help to Keep Your County in the fore-front of agriculture by contributing to the building of a FARM AND HOME CENTER.

WHEN A NEIGHBOR CALLS ON YOU, PLEDGE YOUR FAIR SHARE. TOGETHER, LET'S MAKE THE FARM AND HOME CAMPAIGN THE SUCCESS IT DESERVES TO BE.

GIVE GENEROUSLY!

MINIMUM NEED • \$375,000