

By Young Elizabethtown Farmer

Automated Feeder Pig Set-Up

Glenn Longenecker, a young Elizabethtown RD1 farmer, is starting in the pig feeder business this year — with a new ultra-modern 400 capacity barn.

It's an environmentally controlled, and automatic feeding and watering operation.

The environmental control aspect is particularly unique, according to Paul Heistand of Heistand Bros., Elizabethtown.

The new set-up hasn't exactly eliminated the work from raising feeder pigs, but the automated operation has reduced the time involved to a minimum.

The modern building is 40 by 100 feet with a seven-foot ceiling. A two-foot walkway runs down the center, flanked on either side by rows of pens 10 by 18½ feet.

Each of the 20 pens have a feed bin and watering bowl.

The bins are filled automati-

cally from the three inch tube which runs overhead to the various bins. The tube connects with a compact, push button mixing machine, in turn, gets its materials from three 13 ton tanks for concentrates and corn.

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Heistand, whose firm supplied much of the equipment and know-how for the new pig operation, said it's possible to feed each of the 20 pens an individual mixture of feed.

Five feet deep and 4½ feet wide manure pits run along the entire length of the buildings on the north and south sides. Longenecker says they're similar to septic tanks and have to be pumped out periodically.

The building also has four-inch wide windows running the length of the north and south walls. These are not openable, however, and are only for sunlight.

An automatic medicator set up can shoot medicine into the entire house, Heistand said.

What does it cost? Heistand estimates around \$10,000 for the house, and \$7,000 for the equipment, not including the feeders. Overall, more than a \$20,000 total investment to start.

The automatic control is another feature of the new pig operation.

Robert W. Mieczkowski, president of Tuscarora Electric Manufacturing Company, Inc., emphasized that pigs "can't have extremes in temperature."

The firm's Vent-O-Matic set-up basically involves six fans on the north side of the building and one in the attic.

The six fans are automatically operated by room temperature. Normally at least two fans will be activated at all times when

the pens are full with about 400 pigs.

Presently there are only about 170 pigs in the building so only one fan is operating. As summer approaches more fans will be activated.

The problem now, Heistand noted, is that it's difficult to get enough feeder pigs.

Glenn expects that problem to be solved by his brother-in-law, Lester Landis, who's moving into a nearby farm and plans to set up a farrowing operation big enough to supply the new 400 capacity feeder operation.

In explaining the new ventilation system, Mieczkowski said the object is to "move as much air as possible without changing the (room) temperature."

A key factor in the ventilation system is a row of controllable air intakes along the north and south walls. These intakes can be swung down to let air

across the ceiling or swung out to push air along the side wall.

By controlling the flow of air, the grower can dictate where the pigs will rest. They like the warm part of the pen in winter and the cooler part in the summer, he explained.

Mieczkowski explained that many hog producers get too much heat coming into the building through the attic. The Longenecker building is designed to remove the heat build-up from the attic by means of the fan at one end.

Heistand said one of the things he insisted on to Longenecker and convinced him of was the importance of having a cyclical, rather than on going feeding operation. This means he favors 400 in and 400 out operation as opposed to a constant marketing and replacement program.

"When he started, he wanted to take a load of hogs to market every week. If you don't work with an all in and all out system, you'll have the same problem with disease (in pigs) as in chickens," Heistand explained.

* Another Farm Management Profit-Tip from Organic Plant Food

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Bait and Switch Ads 'Prevalent'

Sam Beirson reported at a recent meeting of the Pennsylvania Egg Marketing Association, that House Bill 1564, has passed three readings, therefore, the Bureau of Markets Law will probably be amended to add greater protection to those in Pennsylvania who sell farm products.

He also reported the Wage and Hour Law had been amended permitting the employment of women for hours equaling those of men providing they are over 18 years of age.

He concluded by reporting that the New York Mercantile Exchange has been closed and trading will no longer be a factor in determining egg prices.

Robert Lutz, Bureau of Consumer Protection, substituting for Miss Bette Clemens, Head of the Bureau, was introduced by President Frank Troester.

"There are many areas where the consumer fails to protect himself by not reviewing contracts very carefully. Most consumers do not read contracts as they should when purchasing an automobile," he said.

Five offices located in Harrisburg, Scranton, Erie, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh handled 19,000 cases in 1969 and were able to recover \$365,000 for consumers.

"Bait and switch advertising is the most prevalent complaint and here again the consumer should be more careful."

"There are many quackeries in repairs of all kinds, and health schemes including claims on pills is greatly overdone."

Weather Forecast

Saturday will be rainy in the morning, with diminishing cloudiness in the afternoon. Temperatures will range between 45 and 52 degrees.

But it will turn colder Saturday night, and Sunday will be cloudy with seasonable temperatures, according to the Philadelphia Weather Bureau.