

A Hobby That Became a Job

Fishers Are Dairymen — With Goats

By Mrs. Charles Mesparan
Farm Feature Writer

Mrs. Jacob (M. Jane) Fisher, Manheim RD1, says, "My hobby turned into my job." She is speaking about her goat herd. The Fishers, who live on their three and three quarter acre "Windy Hill Farm" at the intersection of Bucknoll Road and

that, yes, three to four quarts a day is considered a good one so you see, in comparison to a breed of cows is more of a con- sideration than a comparison.

Goats milk is quite different from cows milk. It is chalk white and has a soft curd, more like Ayrshire cow's milk. The cream stays in suspension and after the

duct's stores sell these products. This company sells in northern Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey as well as nearby places.

You can be sure the milk is wholesome and clean as well as nutritious because dairy inspectors not only inspect the barn but examine the health of the goats. There are seven different state inspectors and one quality control inspector who come to Fishers Lab samples are taken every month. The animals are TB and Bangs tested annually and their well is tested twice a year.

There is a milking machine for nanny goats on the market but most people milk them by hand, as Fishers do twice a day, because it would be too costly unless you had a large herd. Fishers' 37 milking goats sounds like a lot to most people. They want to build up their herd until they have 40 milking all the time. They got their first goat 16 years ago and have gradually increased their herd. They have a milking parlor and let one goat in at a time. They stand down in the pit so they do not have to stoop to milk. They have a few stalls for the goats but for the most part they run loose in the loafing barn. All Mrs. Fisher has to do is to get her goat in hand and they go where she herds them.

What do goats eat? They're not hard to please.

In fact, Fishers dispose of most of their aged and unprofitable goats by selling them to people to clean up fence rows. They eat bark from trees, weeds and just about any growing thing but do not eat as close to the ground as sheep. Fishers feed their goats cow dairy pellets and Purina mixed chow, also mixed and alfalfa hay. They are careful not to let them eat vegetable refuse lest the vegetable might have been sprayed.

How long is a nanny goat profitable? Fishers had one that was 13 years old. A goat's lactation period is 10 months and they are dry 2 months. The gestation period is 5 months. A mother goat usually has two kids at a time but this varies. Fishers had one that had five one time. They put them on the bottle right away.

It is not easy to get a veterinarian to doctor goats because they are not generally skilled with them but treat them as they would sheep or cows. Goats are not the same.

Jacob is president of Pennsylvania Dairy Goat Club. They hold their spring meeting at Penn State University and have shows in summer. Last week they toured the New Balton Center, the tour being sponsored by the Delaware Valley Club. Fishers belong to South Penn Club whose members are largely in York County. Three couples in Lancaster County belong to it. This club used to sponsor a show in York.

There is always a goats show at

parents are active in the Grange, her mother having been secretary of their Grange for several years. Jay belonged to FFA and 4-H. He kept sows and also finished hogs.

Their daughter Martha is married to Richard Buckwalter, Lititz RD3. They live on a 60 acre farm near Lancaster Airport and grow tobacco and corn. They keep steers and pigs.

Mrs. Fisher is the daughter of Oscar Forrey of Lititz. She is involved in community activities. She helped make french fries for Manheim Community Fair. She and Mr. Fisher are 4-H Leaders for the Lititz-Manheim Club which meets once a month March through November. They work with "Handyman" and



Mrs. Fisher shows how she milks her nanny goats in their milking parlor.

Holly Tree Road just south of Manheim, have 65 head of goats including 37 nanny (milking) goats, 4 billy goats and 24 kids.

There are four breeds of goats — namely, Nubian, Toggenburg, Saanen and Alpine. Fishers have all four registered breeds plus some crossbreeds. Goats are registered the same as cows or some other animal.

The Toggenburg gives the most milk (compares to the Holstein cow). The Nubian gives less milk or compares to the Guernsey cow.

A nanny goat gives anywhere between two quarts and seven quarts of milk a day. A goat

milk sets a long time only a small quantity of cream will come to the top. It is good for babies that have colic and for people who have stomach ulcers. It is very easily digested and makes very deliciously rich foods without adding cream. It costs more than cows milk.

Fishers use goat's milk instead of cow's milk for their own use. They have a raw milk permit and sell some of their milk at the farm but deliver most of it to Pure Goat Milk Products of Boyertown. This company makes and sells pasteurized milk, ice cream, yogurt, cheese and cottage cheese. Health food pro-



Mrs. Jacob Fisher shows some of the champion and reserve champion ribbons the Fishers have won with their registered goats.

York, Trenton and Allentown fairs, also at Pittsburgh, Delaware Valley and Erie. Fishers did exhibit at fairs but haven't for two years for lack of time. They have received many ribbons with their goats from Butler County, Pittsburgh, York and other places.

Mrs. Fisher tends to the goats mainly because her husband works as a truck mechanic for Bunkley and Opstone quarries and their son John, who is a senior in Manheim Central High School, is not home during the day. Both Jake and John help some with the goats and Jake and Jane deliver the milk to Boyertown in the evening. John is in the 4-H pig club and has been several years. He has pigs to finish.

Jane says, "We all take care of the garden. Jake makes rows—he takes pile in straight rows, John cultivates and Jane picks the vegetables. She does lots of canning and freezing."

Besides John, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher have a son, Jay, and a daughter, Martha. Jay is in the Army, presently in Vietnam. He is married to the former Kathleen Decker, daughter of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. The parents have a 200 acre farm in Butler County. Her father is active in Young Farmers and both of her

"Rabbits" Fishers used to raise rabbits and just about every kind of animal when all the children were home. Jane has helped with 4-H Achievement Day for three years. She helps get the rabbits lined up.

Fishers were custodians and Mrs. Fisher worked, until two years ago, in the cafeteria of Fauld Elementary School in Manheim Central School District for 10 years. She started to work there when John started to school.

Jane says she has done sewing and embroidery in the past but doesn't have time now. She has many house plants of various kinds. She enjoys cooking and here are some of her recipes. The first two need not require goat's milk, which of course Jane uses, but you would need to use part cream if you used this recipe for ice cream and made it from cow's milk.

ICE CREAM FOR FOUR QUART FREEZER

- 4 eggs
 - 1 1/4 cups sugar
 - 2 1/2 quarts milk
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla
 - 1 cup crushed pineapple
- Beat eggs, add sugar, vanilla
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Fishers have all breeds of goats.