

Lancaster Co. Holstein Breeders See Dairying in Maryland

Two busloads and three carloads of local farmers, some 116 altogether, enjoyed the annual Lancaster County Holstein tour in Maryland Thursday.

The group left from Lancaster Shopping Center at about 8 a.m.

The first stop was the Hanover Shoe Farms, a large horse breeding farm with about 1,500 horses.

The farm has 13 stud stallions, all of them world champions at one time in their lives. Two of the 13 are valued at \$1 million each. Stud service for a living colt ranges from \$750 to \$12,500.

The farm has 290 brood mares as breeding stock. Another 300 mares are boarded for other people.

The 3,500 acre farm is all in pasture and all the hay, grain and straw is purchased.

At Walkersville, the group was met by John Morris, a University of Maryland Extension person, who conducted the remainder of the tour.

The group went to the Walk-

ersville High School FFA department. The FFA has its own greenhouse and many of the flowers and plants grown are sold to people in the community. The FFA also unpacks and assembles new equipment for some local implement dealers, who make donations to the school shop program.

At the Glenn-Lu-Knoll Farm, the big attraction for the local group was "the World's Champion Milk Cow," Reinharts Arthur Farms Ballad, the five-year-old Holstein which recently completed a 365 day lactation of 40,981 pounds of milk and 1,297 pounds of butterfat.

One interesting point noted about this farm is that brewer's malt is purchased from the Baltimore-Washington area and fed at a rate of 60 pounds per cow per day. The cows also get hay and grain.

The herd has a 20,000 pound milk average per year. This herd will be dispersed April 27, except that some animals including the World's Record Cow

will be kept for the nucleus of a new herd.

At the Kingstead Farms near Clarksburg, the group saw an outstanding herd of 136 Holsteins which includes 12 excellent and 60 very good. The 1970 DHIR average was 17,741 pounds of milk and 668 of butterfat.

This is strictly a family operated farm. The cows are housed in stanchion barns. The farm had one cow of 18 years old, one 17 years old and two 16 years old.

This operation shows what any family operation can achieve with the proper know-how and dedication, stated Jay Landis, Lancaster County Holstein Breeders Association President.

At the last stop of the day at Beall Brothers in Clarksburg, the group saw the results of five brothers with six sons who combined their individual farming operations into one large 500 cow free stall operation on 1,400 acres. The Beall brothers raise

1,000 acres of corn each year and put it in four 30 foot and two 24 foot diameter silos, each 60 feet tall.

The remainder of the corn is shelled and recently a new 67,000 bushel corn dryer was installed on the farm.

In the farm's Double-Twelve

Herringbone milking parlor, and three men milk 120 cows per hour.

The Walkersville Fire Company served the local group a family style roast beef dinner and the group left at about 7 p.m. and arrived home at about 9:15 p.m.

Soil May Use More Lime With New Farm Practices

For top yields and the maximum return possible from his land, today's farmer has adapted many improved production practices.

He's applying more nitrogen fertilizer, double cropping more intensely and returning more crop residues to the land to get the most out of his crop program.

Yet, some of these practices

have created additional problems. One of the most serious is acid soil, says Dr. William H. Mitchell, extension agronomist at the University of Delaware.

"In almost every case where farmers are applying high rates of ammonium nitrogen, low soil pH is a major concern," he points out. "And when farmers double crop their land, soil acidity is becoming an even bigger problem."

Mitchell says this does not mean growers should reduce the amount of nitrogen they use. But they should test their land more frequently and be ready to counter an acid with good lime.

"The old rule-of-thumb that said you could get by with a soil test every three to four years should be discarded. Farmers who are putting down large amounts of nitrogen and working their land intensely should have the soil analyzed on a yearly basis."

As an indication of the effect of ammonium fertilizer on soil pH, Mitchell says it takes about two pounds of high quality lime to neutralize a pound of ammonium nitrogen.

Many farmers are also working their soil deeper than in the past, he adds. They're turning up 8 to 10 inches of soil instead of the 6 to 7 inches which was the standard depth for many years. And when more soil is turned up, more lime is required.

"I don't think farmers can afford to neglect their liming practices," cautions Mitchell.

"When the soils become too acid, yields will drop off sharply before we know what's happening!"

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