



These three bulls are an important part of the herd improvement program at the Masonic Home Farm.

Masonic Homes

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12,416 pounds of milk with a butterfat content of 4.5 percent.

Last year, two production trophies came to the Home from the state Ayrshire association. One was for the highest producing cow in the Commonwealth, with 18,691 pounds of milk and 849 fat. The other trophy was for the highest aged cow, with 18,241 milk and 805 fat.

Asked for the secret to his success, Wilson said, "We don't have any special secret. It's just care and management. Milking is the most important job on any dairy farm, so we try to be especially careful milkers. If you do a poor job of milking, all the breeding and feeding programs in the world aren't going to do you much good."

Record keeping is an essential element in the farm's success, too. Wilson noted that the Home's Ayrshire herd has been on DHIA

for at least 40 years. And it's always been an Ayrshire herd. "We just feel Ayrshire milk is easier to digest," Wilson said, "although I know a lot of people won't agree with that."

Herd replacements are raised right on the farm, and there are 81 calves and heifers being reared at the moment. Artificial breeding figures into the farm's program, but they also maintain three herd bulls. A first calf heifer from one of those bulls has produced 12,720 pounds of milk in her first 223 days of lactation, and she's still milking 54 pounds a day. Wilson said he expects she'll produce over 16,000 pounds in her first lactation with some 635 pounds of fat. "Looks like we've got a winner," he noted.

Wilson's feeding program calls for some 40 to 50 pounds of silage a day, with free choice hay and some grain. All the feed, except for supplement, is grown on part



Some 85 Ayrshires are milked daily at the Masonic Home Farm. These animals are being herded to the parlor past the

abattoir where meat is prepared for the Home's guests.

of the home's 1500 tillable acres. Some 300 acres are in corn, there's another 115 acres in alfalfa, 70 in barley and 40 in wheat. Besides the dairy herd, these crops are used to feed 500 to 600 head of hogs yearly, and about 120 head of steers.

In addition to its own meat and milk, the farm produces its own vegetables and fruits, and every year sells a great deal of surplus produce.

Wilson has five full-time

workers helping him run the dairy operation. Each works six days and is off one day. Milking times are 4:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m., quitting time is 5:00 p.m. with an hour off for breakfast and an

hour-and-a-half for lunch. Nearly all the farm workers live right on the farm, and there's a lot of interest in 4-H. This year there were 11 youngsters with 4-H projects.

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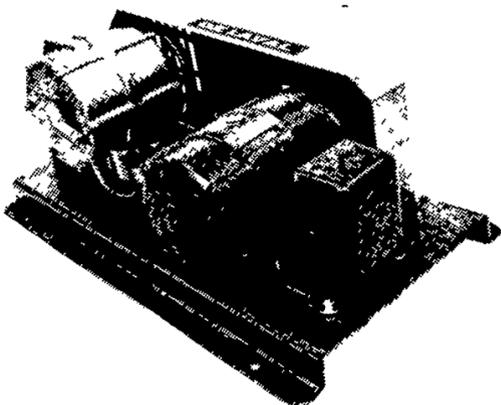
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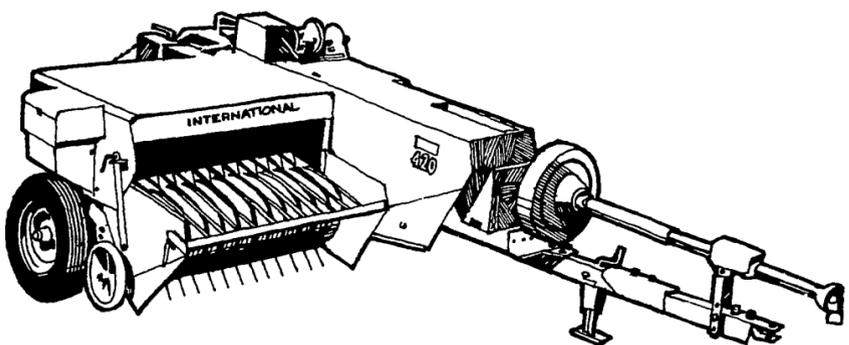
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