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35 years old. He looks for himself, and he thinks work experience is worth a lot more than schooling.

D'Avanzo said he puts in more hours than any of his men, and he hasn't had a day off in months. Sounds suspiciously like a small dairy farmer.

The annual rolling herd average at Bryncoed is 4,680 pounds of milk from a 250-cow herd of Registered Holsteins. Milkings begin at 5 a.m. and 5 p.m., and it takes eight to nine hours to complete milking. An automated Surge milking parlor with automatic take-off and preparation for six cows at a time, makes milking a one-man chore, but the man in the parlor is replaced after he's been there about four hours. D'Avanzo said they've got enough help to keep mostly to a 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule, with one day off every week for each man. The early and late milking shifts are rotated so that the burden falls equally to everyone.

The Bryncoed cows are divided into four milking groups, and fed and milked as groups. Group one consists of cows milking 70 pounds a day and over, group two consists of those in the 50 to 69 pound category, group three are milking 35 to 49 pounds and group four put

out less than 35. All groups get 45 pounds of corn silage, six pounds of 14 percent pellets in the parlor, and six pounds of hay. Protein supplement and high moisture corn rations are varied according to production. Group one, for example, gets 10 pounds of 38 percent pellets daily, and 15 pounds of high moisture corn. Group three gets only five pounds of 38 percent pellets and eight pounds of high moisture corn.

Dry cows are fed three to five pounds of 38 percent pellets daily, plus free choice timothy hay and that's all. "I don't believe in feeding corn silage to dry cows because they don't need it," D'Avanzo said. "I have very little milk fever or congested udders, no displaced stomachs and hardly any acenemia with my dry cow feeding program."

All the Bryncoed cows are Registered Holsteins, and all are on DHIA test. Both bulls and AI are used for breeding, but the bulls are used mostly for the young heifers. When they're milking, the cows are always confined to the free stall barn. They're never on pasture except when they're dry.

Alfalfa hay and haylage, high moisture corn and corn silage are all grown on the farm. All grain supplies are

purchased, and D'Avanzo said the price of feed is making it more and more difficult to show a profit for his operation, and he feels it's got to be worse for small dairymen. He feels it's been that way for a long time, and it's going to get worse. "Last year alone," he said, "over 100 dairy farmers dropped out in Pennsylvania. They sold their cows for beef. If this trend continues, dairy cows will soon be as scarce as buffalo. USDA says we'll have higher feed prices this year and throughout 1975, yet milk prices just don't keep up. This is going to hurt an awful lot of small farmers, and I think a lot more will be giving up."

The Bryncoed name was once familiar at area dairy shows, but that's a thing of the past, D'Avanzo said. "There's no profit in the showing. You've got labor and trucking costs piled up just to earn a lot of ribbons. It doesn't matter anymore what a cow does in the showing. We care about classification and production. We want all the milk we can get, and we only care about a cow's performance in the milking parlor."

Jacob Dienner - "I make a good living milking 30 cows."

The Bryncoed Farms interview took place in a glassed-in office looking out over the milking parlor and the 250-cow freestall barn. From there we went to the comfortable kitchen of Jacob Dienner, Gordonville RD1, who has been a dairy farmer since 1959. Dienner is milking 29 Registered Holsteins, and last year had a herd average of 17,100 pounds of milk, 604 pounds of fat for a 3.5 percent test.

Dienner recalled that last year production peaked at an average of 60 pounds per day and stayed that way for a month. This year, production went up to 70 pounds and stayed there for two months. It's fallen back a bit now, but is still up over 60 pounds daily.

Can a farmer make a living with a small herd? "Yes, you can," Dienner said, "but you don't want a lot of culls in your herd. You



This cow in the Jacob Dienner herd is milking over 100 pounds a day right now. Dienner is a small dairy farmer, with 29 head milking, and he

believes that the small farmer can make a good living if he's a good manager.

need high producing cows, and you've got to treat them well."

Individual attention, Dienner feels, is the important ingredient a small

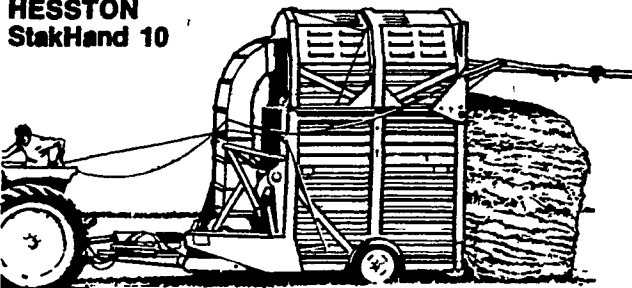
dairyman adds to the care he gives his cows. Dienner's cows are fed individually according to production, and they're fed in small amounts six times a day. This is a

luxury large operations can't afford, Dienner feels. He also likes top quality alfalfa hay for his animals. His grain ration consists mostly

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## When the crew is you

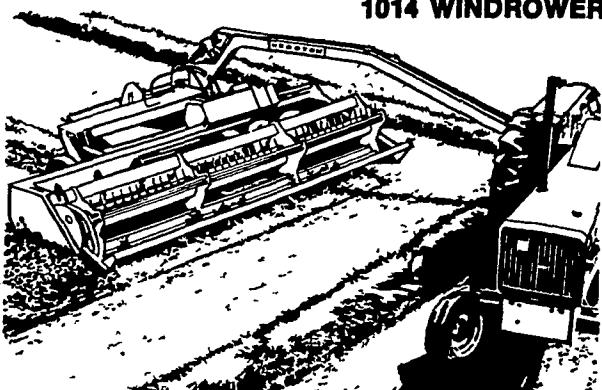
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