

Working For

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another Holstein dairyman with 44 head. Lucas was in the process of adding on to his cow barn when we called on him. One of the first things a visitor sees is a spring fed pond between the house and the barn. It's filled with the same sparkling clear water that goes to the cows.

Like all the model herds in the study, the Lucas animals form a fairly steady population. One of the goals of the project was to find herds with low rates of turnover, under 28 percent, and Lucas falls well within that range. And, like all the herds in the project, both the model ones and those with problems. Lucas is on DHIA test.

Production in the Lucas herd averages a respectable 14,800 pounds of milk per year and 545 pounds of fat. He grows 90 acres of corn, 30 of oats and 50 acres of hay to feed his herd. Hay is fed free choice in the summer, and ten pounds per animal per day in the winter.

"I believe in feeding a mixed forage," Lucas told the group. "I like soybeans and dry grain, and I've always fed oats, even when I'm feeding high moisture corn." Lucas recently purchased a portable grinder-mixer so that can prepare his own feed. "I want to know exactly how it's mixed," he explained.

Like most of the Project 1870 animals, the Lucas herd is a family operation with 50 to 60 cows. Choosing the model herds was in itself quite a project, according to Dr. Richard Adams. "We went through 120 possible herds before we found the 15 we wanted to study," he said. "As a rule, the larger the



Bellefonte dairyman Harold Lucas, left, examines some of the lab findings on his cow with Dr. Richard Adams, Project 1870's dairy science specialist. Lucas owns one of the model herds in the study.

herd, the more intensive the farming, and the more problems you're going to find."

"The trick now is to find another 10 problem herds," Adams added. If the problems in these herds can be studied in light of the findings from the model herds, perhaps some advances can be made in curing or preventing the health syndromes which can affect the herds of some of the best managers.


Money to study these problem herds, though, will not come from the state of federal government. It must come instead

from the dairy industry, both Adams and Guss stressed. Agribusiness firms, largely through their trade association, Penn Ag Industries, have already poured some \$7000 into the project. Breed organizations, AI cooperatives and some individuals have sent in contributions, too, but more money is needed, the researchers said, to carry on the work to its conclusion.

Dairymen who wish to contribute to the reasearch project can do so by sending a check directly to Dr. Robert Flipse, Room 229, Agricultural Administration Building, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. 16802. Checks should be made out to Penn State, and Marked "For Project 1870".

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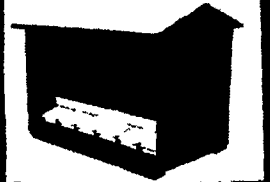
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