

Herr chosen outstanding farmer

Second of two parts

By DIETER KRIEG

KIRKWOOD - A 31-year-old, conservation-minded dairyman who owns 92 milking cows and operates 505 acres was recently honored by the Quarryville Jaycees as that area's outstanding young farmer.

Dale Herr, one of eight finalists in the biannual event, received the coveted prize and opportunity to represent Solanco in state-wide competition, on the basis of his achievements, conservation practices, and contributions to the community.

Associated with farm work for all his life, Herr received the honor under some circumstances which seem to buck a few general trends within the industry. Last year, for example, he was farming an additional 205 acres, and nine years ago, when he began farming on his own, he had 126 cows on test. Herr's present emphasis is more on quality, rather than quantity, and he claims the move has paid off in the dairy barn.

One of the major changes Herr has initiated in recent years is his dairy feeding program which now utilizes two Harvestores. At the time of my visit, he kept high-moisture ear corn in one structure and haylage in the other. Hay hasn't been a part of the dairy cows' menu since early this year, and Herr says he's pleased with results. His fat tests have come up two points. This year,



Herr Hope Farm, between Kirkwood and Quarryville, is the home of Dale and Fay Herr, winners of the Quarryville Jaycees Outstanding

Young Farmer Contest. Herr farms 505 acres and maintains a herd of 180 Holsteins and Guernseys with the help of four full-time hired men.

he said, he only baled about 2,000 bales of hay while the equivalent of about 10,000 bales went into the Harvestore.

Of the 505 acres in the three farms he operates, 312 are tillable. He raises all of his own feed and sells tobacco and potatoes as cash crops. For the nine years he has farmed on his own, he has consistently shipped over a million pounds of milk per year. Citing a 600-pound butterfat average as a major goal, his present herd average on 92 cows reads 517. Herr's dairy herd is actually two-in-one, although they're all in the same barn and taken care of by one management program.

Originally an all-Guernsey herd, Holsteins have been taking the stalls of the English breed for the past ten years. The first black-and-whites were purchased in 1965 when the elder Herr was still in charge of the dairy operation. At the present time there are still seven Guernseys in the barn, but Herr expects to have a solid Holstein herd at some time in the future. Although many

of his animals are purebreds, he and a number of individuals from whom he purchased cows did not keep papers. Therefore Herr considers his herd to be about 50 per cent purebreds but not registered. Switching to a registered herd is another one of his ambitions for the coming years.

Cows at Herr's farm are housed in a massive barn which has been remodeled and added onto several times. The chain-tie stalls, Herr admits, are still a bit small for Holsteins since they were originally intended for Guernseys, but from a practical viewpoint they're working out satisfactorily. He tries to keep "smaller" Holsteins than what is generally strived for by most Holstein breeders.

Although Herr is aiming to put a 600-pound butterfat production average on his herd, he claims that he does not push for big records. "I draw the line between feeding cows for production and feeding cows for records," he emphasized, a bit of information which he also reflected in this philosophical statement:

"I try to do the most, and the best, with what I have to work with."

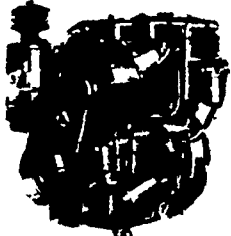
A progressive farmer who believes more in quality than quantity, Herr stated he doubts that he will increase the size of his herd to more than 100 cows. Acreage expansion is also doubtful due to high prices for land, he added, although he still "farms" elsewhere as a custom operator.

Herr hopes to reach his goal of 600 pounds butterfat through "better feeds, breeding, and management." He described his present herdsman, Robert Smith, as being very capable and really doing the job. Besides Smith, Herr has three other fellows working for him: Melvin

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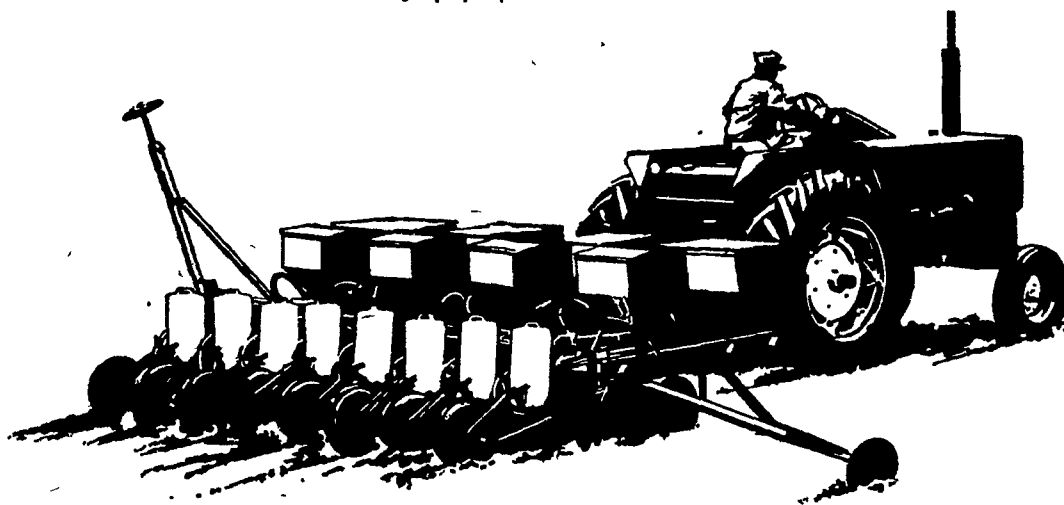
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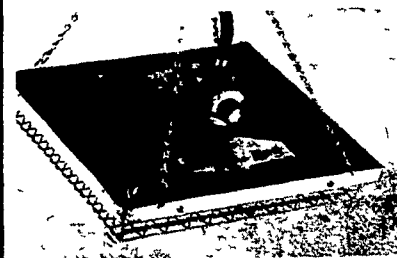
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