



Dairyman happy with his career

"Oliver Farms" is sheltered by Tussey Mountain and stately evergreens.

By DIETER KRIEG
GRAYSVILLE — Bob Oliver and his family have an optimistic outlook for agriculture. The business is becoming more and more competitive — which creates some pressures — but there's much satisfaction derived from over-coming the challenges of managing a farm. The Huntingdon County dairyman should know. His management programs have undergone a lot of changes since he started farming on his own in 1960.

Prior to his going on his own, he had worked several years for his father. Taking those years into consideration, (to make it an even twenty) here's a glimpse of what has gone on at "Oliver Farms."

The herd has increased nearly five-fold — from 23 milking cows in 1954 to more than 100 today. Along with it have come improvements in production per cow and the inevitable "remodelings" of the milkhouse. The Olivers were among the first to install a bulk tank 22 years

ago, and have traded old ones in for larger models for several times already. This year will be another year for such a change as Oliver prepares to have a 1500-gallon tank installed to hold the approximately 5000 pounds of milk his cows produce daily. In 1976 he expects to come close to marketing 1.5 million pounds of milk.

The changes here — as on thousands of farms across the country — have come as a result of economic pressures, individual planning, advancements in technology, and just plain modernization. The two farms, which consist of 250 tillable acres in Spruce Creek Valley, are operated by the 41-year old Oliver, his wife, two children, and a full-time assistant, Terry Foster. Efficiency has had to be the name of the game as production costs rise and receipts lag a little behind.

With 15 years of solid farm management experiences under his belt, Oliver says he's had some regrets about the way economic pressures

have forced him to change and grow. But much of it was due to his own planning and he says that if his farming operation hadn't grown, he might have gotten discouraged. Like in most businesses, it's natural to

expect some growth and advancements.

Adaptations at "Oliver Farms" have not been limited to the dairy herd. They've also been evident in field work and all-around efficiency. The common

plow, for example, one of the pieces of equipment so closely associated with agriculture, is fading out of the picture here and on many other farms across the country. These changes, of course,

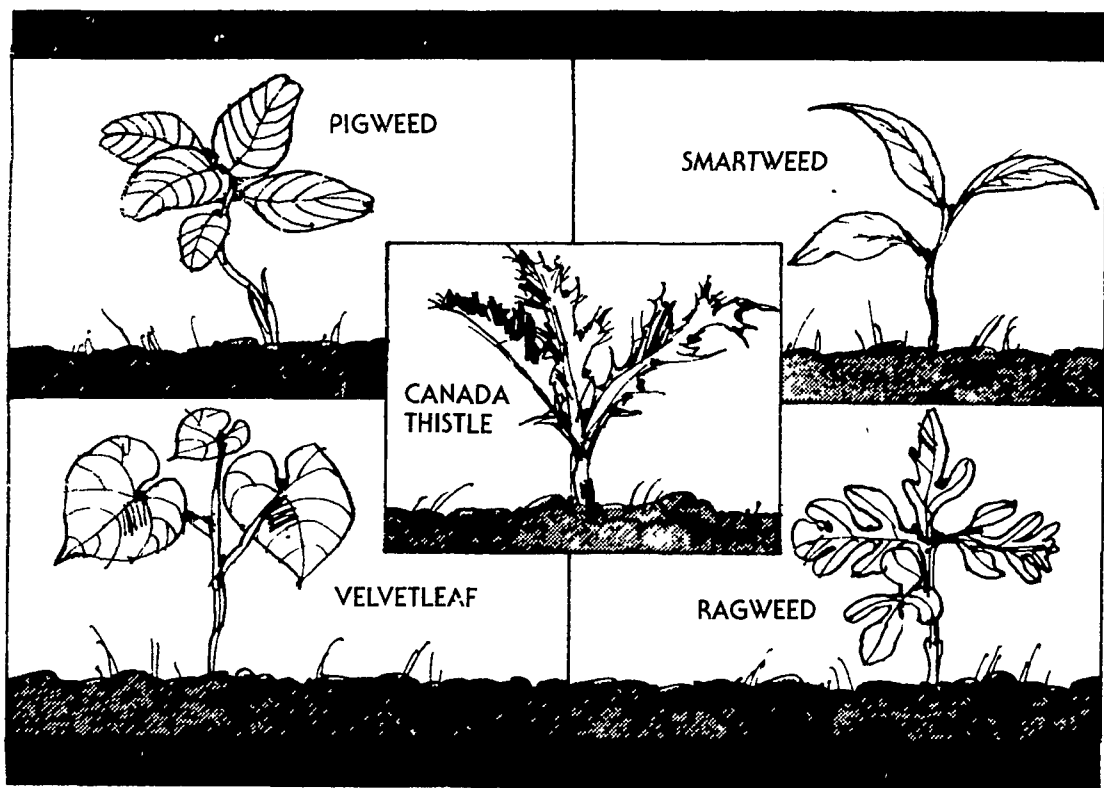
haven't come cheap. Consider Oliver's new dairy barn — an 80 by 160 foot structure with 124 stalls.

Oliver built the new barn, one silo, automated feeding

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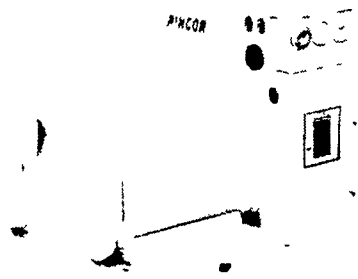
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