

The milk really flowed last year

By DIETER KRIEG

JONESTOWN, Pa. - "We just do the daily chores the way they should be done, and try to keep regular time - that's the main thing," says Edwin Funck modestly about his high producing herd of Holsteins. The central Lebanon County dairyman finished the recently complete DHIA testing year with an average production of 19,101 pounds of milk and 737 of fat on 39 cows. That gave him the top spot for butterfat and runner-up honors for milk.

Funck is perhaps being just a bit too modest, for he does have a few management techniques which differ from the ordinary. Some - like the milking machines suspended underneath his cows at milking time, are practices which have been around for decades. Others - like mixing small grains with high moisture corn, are ideas which remain undiscovered by most other dairymen.

Funck operates a total of 274 acres near here (70 of it rented) with the help of his wife, a son, and hired assistant. They keep the milking herd on the 91 acre home farm, known as "Saredhill," while replacement heifers are kept at a nearby property. Hay and corn are the main crops, with a good measure of small grains thrown in for crop rotation purposes. On the latter, Funck considers good management of crops and soils to be equally as important as the decisions and work which involve the dairy herd. He tests his soil and forages regularly and follows soil conservation practices. He is, in fact, a committeeman for Lebanon County Soil Conservation.

In the dairy business for more than 20 years, Funck has been on DHIA for most of that time. And he has always had respectable averages. In 1966, for example, he averaged 13,808 pounds of milk and 549 of fat on 27 cows. The following year it jumped to 15,256 and 584, respectively. A year later he broke the 600-pound mark for butterfat with plenty of room to spare. The final tally showed an average of 16,605 pounds of milk and 622 of fat on 28 cows.

The Lebanon Countain does not pretend that it's always been a steady sweep to the top. His production dropped in 1969, for example, and he speculates that his feeding program might have had something to do with it. Since then



Edwin Funck credits his high moisture corn and grain ration for having had much to do with his high production records.

he has eliminated pelleted feeds from the ration and production has improved. Last year he shipped an average of 16,603 pounds of milk and 625 of butterfat from 39 cows. That's hardly different from the 1968 average, but the herd size has increased.

The big jump in production came this past year when each of his cows pumped out an average extra 2500 pounds of milk for the year. In the butterfat column, the statistics jumped by 112 pounds.

"We just hit it good last year," Funck explained, adding that staying on top of the heap will be even tougher than getting there in the first place. He figures the good growing conditions of 1976 gave him high-yielding harvests and high quality feeds. "Next year I might not be so lucky," he said in anticipation of having to defend his championship herd.

"We still do most things the old way yet," the successful dairy farmer replied to a question about management. "We don't have feed bunks or anything like that," he added.

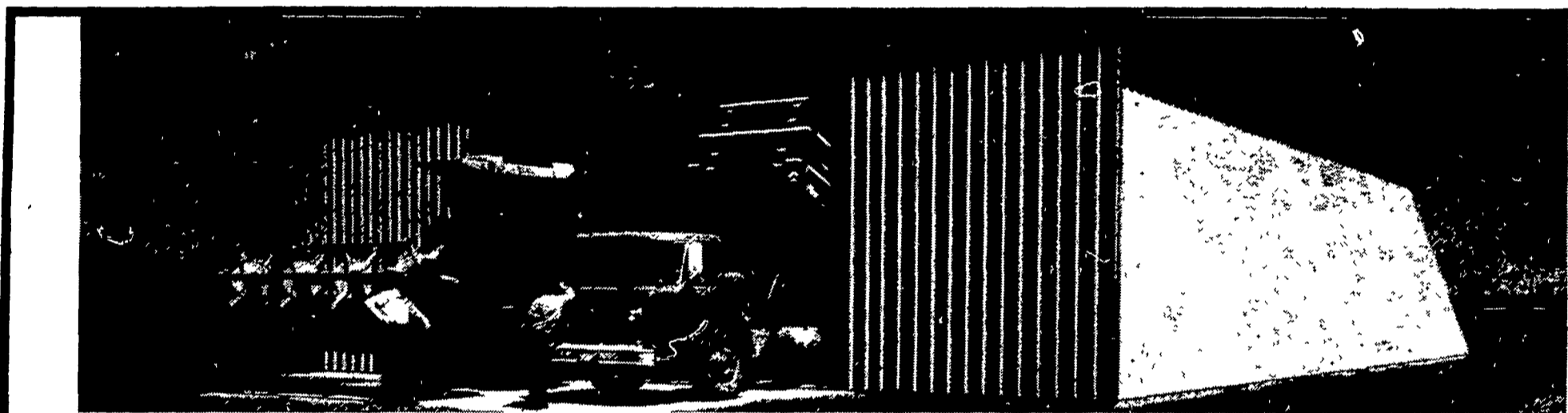
A stroll through the barn revealed that Funck keeps his "Saredhill Holsteins" in the same old stanchions which he had put in his barn in 1964. He milks with the old bucket-type Surge milkers and dumps the white juice into a sputnik. Not much has changed over the years, Funck pointed out.

While things have remained relatively constant in the stable, this is not true for his feeding system. A pair of Harvestore silos are the hub of the feed center. One contains small grains mixed with high moisture corn, the other haylage.

Funck is tickled with the way it works. Although he still bales some of his hay, most of it goes into the silo - which saves him a lot of time, work and dependence on the weather, besides doing away with a few machinery investments. That takes care of most of his roughage. The smaller structure takes care of just about all of his protein, and has all but eliminated his need for a feed dealer. It has erased his dependence on feed grinding, since a crimper is a part of his feeding system. All he buys commercially are two mineral additives and a 40 per cent protein supplement.

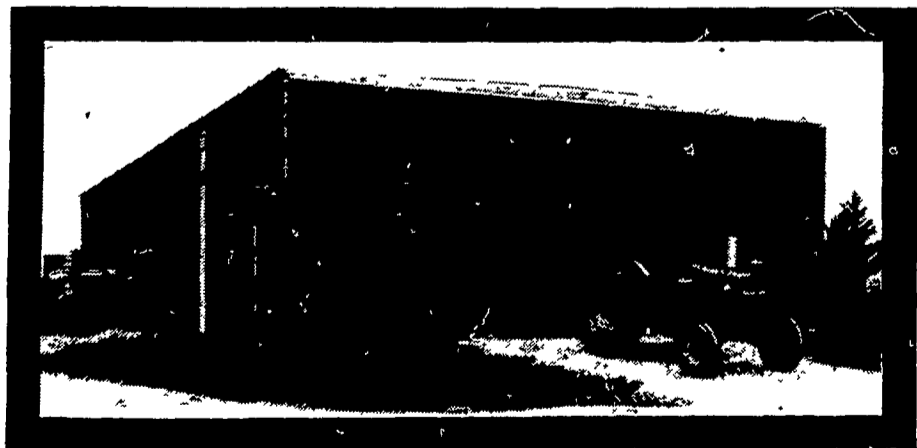
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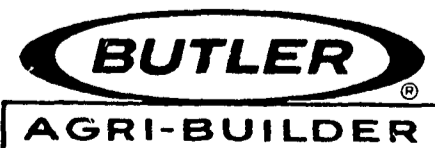


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