

Nine cows led way to Master Farmer

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. - A Bradford County farmer, whose 82 cows last year produced almost 1.5 million pounds of milk and at a low feed cost that any dairyman would envy, has been named recipient of a Master Farmer Award for 1976.

Milford Kinsman, 47, of Troy R3, will receive the coveted award sponsored by the Pennsylvania Farmer magazine, Harrisburg, and the Cooperative Extension Service of The Pennsylvania State University, on January 11 at a Master Farmer luncheon in Harrisburg.

In the most recent DHIA year, the new Master Farmer's cows averaged 17,265 pounds of milk and 699 pounds of butterfat. And perhaps as revealing of dairy success are two other statistics - almost 500,000 pounds of milk shipped per man annually and a \$3.47 feed cost per 100 pounds of milk produced.

After trying several "city" jobs following high school, Kinsman started farming on shares with nine cows. In 1950 he married Shirley and continued farming on shares until 1955. By then the young farm couple had 18 cows and a chance to rent her father's farm. Three years later they bought the 120-acre farm and have called it home ever since.

"We never thought we'd be milking 82 cows," Mrs. Kinsman recalls. In 1959, with a young family, they were hard pressed to take care of 35 cows. But expansion was inevitable. In 1961, they purchased a 113-acre adjoining farm and by 1963 were milking cows in two barns.

"I had a surplus of cows and a shortage of money," he points out. "So I sold every cow with a DHIA record and paid off all my debts without missing a milk shipment. I held back 35 first calf heifers."



Milford Kinsman tried several in-town jobs after high school, then started farming on shares with nine cows. The Bradford Countian now milks 82 cows and was recently named a Master Farmer.

There is no easy explanation of what makes this farm operation successful. Kinsman will emphasize his family. Everyone helps with wife, Shirley, and son, Kim, milking on a regular basis. Daughters, Penny and Pearl, help when school and studies allow.

Two daughters, Pamela and Patricia, have completed college and live elsewhere. Another son, Glen, is studying for a master's degree at West Virginia University.

Another key is a strong

forage feeding program. The milking herd starts off the day with 20 pounds of corn silage per cow before milking. This is toppedressed with ground high moisture ear corn and 28 per cent protein supplement. After the cows are turned out, they eat more high moisture corn, then eight pounds of second cutting alfalfa.

At 4 p.m. cows get another 20 pounds of corn silage plus grain. Following evening milking they are fed about eight pounds of first cutting

alfalfa hay to carry them through the night.

"We never feed over 30 pounds of grain a day to a cow," the Master Farmer explains. "Basically they receive one pound of grain for each four pounds of milk."

The Master Farmer houses and milks the cows in a stanchion barn with four rows of cows. It is a remodeled expanded bank barn that dates back to the 1900's.

"We try to produce the best forage possible," he notes. "In 1975 our first cutting of alfalfa tested 18

per cent crude protein and second cutting, 22 per cent. Rain hurt the quality of the 1976 crop, though, with protein testing a poor 11.3 per cent. Second cutting alfalfa fared better at 19.8 per cent."

Kinsman has some strong opinions on cow management. Barn schedules are rigid. He doesn't vary 10 minutes on milking or feeding. And he dries off cows regardless of production when they are within two months of freshening.

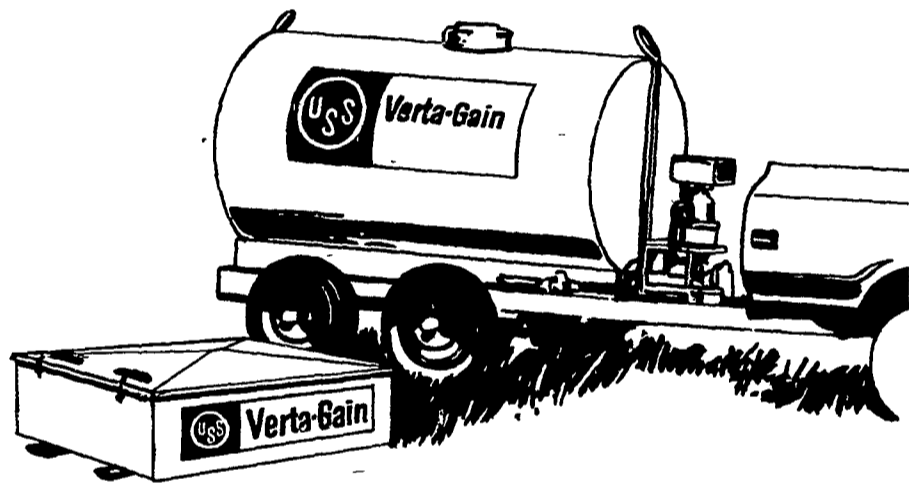
On the way to his 17,000-pound per cow average, he

fed an all-natural protein supplement that included soybean meal, distillers by-products and oats, plus molasses and minerals.

Commenting on problems encountered in his dairy operation, the Master Farmer points out that numerous cows would not conceive. It was traced to cystic ovaries, the cause not known. To counteract this condition, he's switching sires and rebalancing minerals. He also had one major outbreak of mastitis in recent years

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