

Francis Kirk to host Guernsey field day

By DIETER KRIEG
WAKEFIELD - Francis and Ethel Kirk, owners of Cedar Fringed Farms, near here, will host the Lancaster County Guernsey Field Day next Thursday. Highlights of the day include a judging contest, a calf give-away, and an address by Rowland Bowway, manager of Quail Roost Farms. Prizes will be given to the top dairy judges in each of three divisions for men, women and children. In addition, there'll be a chicken barbecue and home-made ice cream.

The Kirks stress individual care and attention from the day a calf is born until it leaves their registered Guernsey herd. Every calf is provided with a pen of his own, is individually bottle-fed and receives an infra-red lamp when necessary. This kind of individual attention is especially evident at milking time - the three row, 65-stall

stable is used exclusively for milking. When the pipeline was installed in 1963, it gave the Kirks the efficiency of a parlor without sacrificing any of the advantages of conventional housing and milking systems.

There are approximately 40 Guernsey herds in Lancaster County, and the Kirk herd is one of the largest, numbering 225 head with cows, heifers and calves.

As many as 145 cows are kept at Cedar Fringed Farms during the winter. Francis' wife, Ethel, who is not from a dairy farm originally, has become thoroughly acquainted with every phase of a dairy operation.

The Kirk's present rolling herd average stands at 10,334 pounds of milk, a 4.9 per cent test, and 513 pounds of butterfat. More than 20 cows in the herd have records exceeding 600 pounds of butterfat. The herd has also

had fine representation at dairy shows in the area.

Once the cows are milked they are returned to a concreted feeding area, from where they have access to either the pasture or the spacious 69' x 120' pole barn. This loose housing facility is bedded with sawdust that comes from a sawmill on the Kirk property. A 24 by 60 concrete-stave silo provides silage, as do a 15 by 100 bunk silo and a couple of smaller structures. Silage is fed 365 days a year, and Francis says it usually takes around 100 acres of corn to supply his needs. Hay is also fed year-round and in unlimited quantities. If necessary Francis will purchase hay, but only top quality, he says. With feed costs being a concern to every dairyman, one way of keeping things in balance here has been to purchase wet brewers grains out of Baltimore. "Great

feed", comments Francis, a 1949 graduate of Penn State, and former member of that university's horse, swine, and beef cattle judging teams.

A 20 per cent commercial feed is fed at the ratio of 1:4 when wet brewers grains are available, and if not, then grain feeding is increased to approximately one pound of feed per three pounds of milk. The wet brewers grains are fed out in the bunk, not in the milking barn. For additional protein needs, and LPS feeder is available.

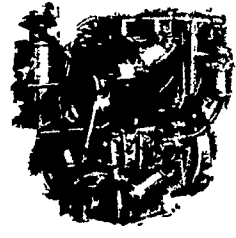
The all registered herd of Guernseys is 100 per cent homebred. It has been 20 years since animals other than bulls were purchased. Mrs. Kirk is proud of the fact that she raised all but 15 of the animals in the herd, and

those were started by Francis' father. Almost all heifer calves are raised as herd replacements.

The Kirk's farm a total of 265 acres, most of which goes

into corn. Other crops are primarily hay and barley.

Directions on how to get to the Kirks' farm will be posted along Route 222 below Wakefield.



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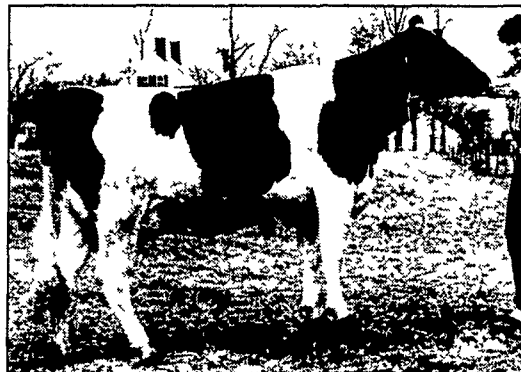


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