

My Thoughts

And welcome to them



By **JOANNE SPAHR**
Assistant Editor

"Look out, pheasant, here I come." I exclaimed gloriously to myself and to an imaginary cockbird as I barged clumsily through the row of corn, trying desperately to keep up with the big strides of the hunters to my right.

I was stalking that illusive quarry - the ringneck pheasant - with my father and his hunting friends just as I always had done from the time I was able to walk along the end row to flush out the game.

But, this year was different - I was carrying a gun for the first time in my whole life

Exhilarated as I was, I recalled conversations at target practice between my brother and myself that went something like this:

"Jo, what are you aiming at?" says big brother.

"What do you think I'm aiming at - I'm aiming at the target," I reply, aggravated.

"Are you sure?" he asks incredulously, smirking nastily

"Yes, I'm sure"

"Then how come you haven't hit it yet?"

No reply.

Well, maybe I never hit anything at target practice, but when the real live bird flew out, I knew I'd be sure to get a hit.

Then it happened. Suddenly, out of the crisp, cool Autumn air, a majestic, seemingly frantic, pheasant careened above the corn stalks, beating its wings on invisible drums in the air.

Heart pounding, I fumbled with the gun in my hands when, bang, a report that sent a heart-stopping shock through my body also caught the pheasant, and held it in a statuesque pose at the height of its ascent, and then rapidly felled it to the ground

"It's yours, Jo, it's yours," someone yelled. "Go get it"

Mindlessly, I began hurdling through the fallen, entangled corn, hunting for the bird. When I found it, I proudly handed the prize to my dad who stuffed it into his hunting coat with a smile.

I never did hit any other birds that day, but it didn't matter. When we went in, I thought over the morning's activities. It had been a pretty good hunt. I'd carried my gun for the first time, and had a pheasant to call my own in Dad's jacket. But, most of all, I shared a secret with one of those hunters out there which I knew I'd never forget. I hadn't fired a shot all day.



Herbert Wessel, president of Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers, expresses confidence in MCMP's membership being able to cope with current "opportunities."



Surplus milk is the number one problem for dairymen right now, says Ralph Strock, general manager of Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers.

Heavy surpluses

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will be made to creditors," said MCMP general manager Ralph Strock.

Although the surplus milk and Koontz insolvency situations have blemished the cooperative's financial situation, it nevertheless reports a higher income for 1977 than it had in 1976, and

looks forward to improved conditions next year.

The general outlook for dairy farmers for the remainder of this year is mixed. Feed prices are low, and the milk price-feed cost ratio is at its best level since late 1972. This has spurred milk production nationwide. Maryland Co-op is not alone in its quest to find outlets for

surplus milk. The surplus situation, in short, will continue to be a burden for middle Atlantic dairymen through at least 1977.

With reference to the surplus situation, Strock and other officials of Maryland Co-op remarked that their Holly Milk Plant, now under construction near Carlisle, is coming a year too late. Built to be the most modern plant of its kind in the world, MCMP holds half interest in the facility along with Inter-State Milk Producers of Philadelphia. Dairymen belonging to the two cooperatives are looking forward to the opening of the plant to alleviate the surplus problem. Construction of the Holly plant is said to be behind schedule in some respects, but ahead in others. Overall, the plant is still expected to be in operation next May.

The plant is designed to handle 2 million pounds of milk daily. Being built at a cost of over \$8 million, the plant features the latest automated equipment and technology. Included in the facilities are nine silos, several of which stand 75 feet high.

There is plenty of milk available for the new plant, the 124 York County members of MCMP were told. During the first eight months of this year, MCMP marketed 237 million pounds of milk in excess of the needs of Class I buyers to eight processing plants. This represents an increase of 67 million pounds over 1976 and 112 million pounds more than was marketed through manufacturing channels in 1975, explained Strock. Between MCMP and Inter-State, the plant could have been utilized to peak capacity beginning in April of this year.

The subject of handling surplus milk dominated the meeting. It was noted that much of the surplus milk from MCMP has been handled through the Allentown cheese plant owned by the Lehigh Valley Milk Producers Cooperative. MCMP management expressed gratitude and appreciation for these arrangements, pointing out that such cooperation is particularly noteworthy since the entire marketing area is flooded with milk.

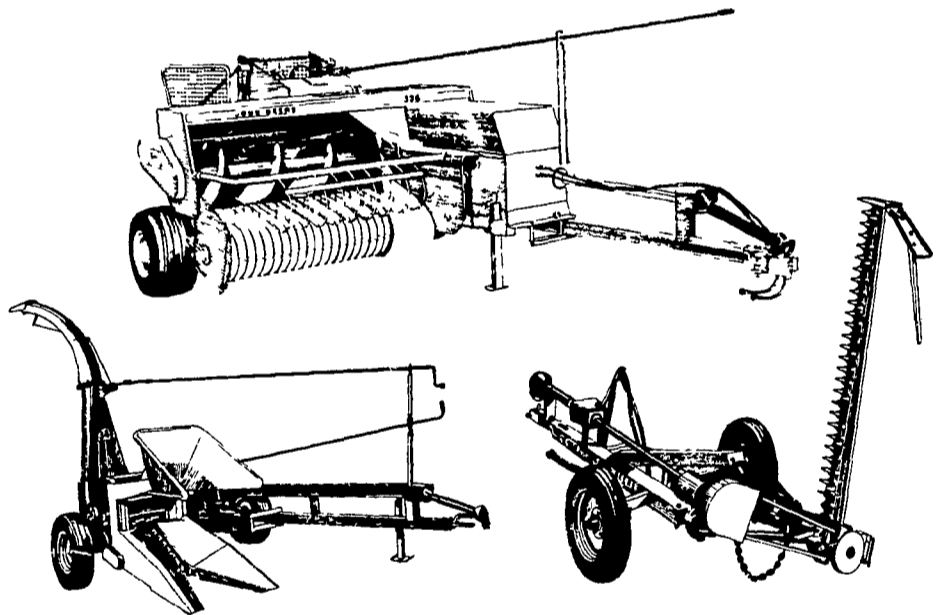
The arrangement with Le-Hi is part of an agreement formed nearly a

year ago which brought several dairy cooperatives from this area under one umbrella. Known as the (Continued on Page 39)

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