

# LIFE on the farm



By Dieter Krieg

If it weren't for July, I might have given up my residence in Pennsylvania seven years ago.

After having spent part of a Summer in sunny Florida, I returned to the Keystone State in early July and immediately fell in love with the scenery I had missed since May.

Golden grain fields and lush green ribbons of corn rows stretched around the gently rolling hills. Laden with a ripe and heavy crop, the stalks of wheat and barley waved gently in the warm breezes of mid-Summer. The corn was waist-high and higher. The sun-bathed fields of green and gold were a sight to behold!

And there was more - as there is every Summer. The sweet smell of hay perfumed the countryside. And I'll never forget the pleasant smell of

straw, or the scent of moist earth which had been hidden under tall grain since Spring.

Bright sunshine reflecting on the corn, standing wheat, or stubble is a display of Nature's jewelry. Florida certainly has its beauty - but nothing to compare with the pretty scenery of Pennsylvania's diversified farming.

Threshing machines have been a fascination of mine since I was a small child. They're gone now - except for appearances at special events. But, here, in the heart of the Pennsylvania German country, I can still appreciate the long rows of shocks. And the combine is almost as fascinating as a threshing machine. Even the dust is a part of July, and I for one would miss it if it were gone.

It's not comfortable, I know, and I've hated the itch of both grain and hay dust all over me, but that made the dip in the pond so much more enjoyable.

And while I can't say I looked forward to milking hot, sweaty, smelly cows on a July afternoon, those same cows were a beautiful sight when I watched them graze later that evening. Who can deny that the slick, black coat of a Holstein isn't pretty? And those long shadows stretching across the pasture as cooler air moves in and the sun settles into a nest in the distant forest - isn't that a precious sight?

I've never minded the heat of July either. The work of the season can get tiresome and boring, but the

beauty of Summer is everlasting no matter how high the mercury stretches.

July is also the time for sitting on a porch with a girlfriend or grandparents and listening to the soothing concert of a thousand crickets. Later, as daylight fades, the frogs at the pond join in the music. Who can deny the pleasantries of such a scene?

The frogs and crickets continue their heavenly music long after bedtime. And the sweet smell of hay and straw drifts into open bedroom windows. A guy can certainly go to sleep with such a lullaby as long as there is just enough of a breeze to keep the curtains waving gracefully.

That's all a part of life on the farm which I'll consider precious forever.

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