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Akers sets new record in butterfat

By DIETER KRIEG
 QUARRYVILLE — When Curtis Akers casually implied that he was fussy, he may have inadvertently given away the secret to his success in the dairy business. Akers claims he doesn't do much of anything that's different from what other dairymen do, and that he has the same problems every other cow man experiences.

Akers, a southern Lancaster County Holstein breeder, recently established a new record in the Red Rose Dairy Herd Improvement Association: an average of 750 pounds of butterfat per cow per year. He was singled out for a special award earlier this week when the Association held its annual awards dinner at the Good'n Plenty Restaurant in Smoketown.

While Akers' record may impress many people, Akers himself says the performance of his cows "isn't all that great. Records are made to be broken. This won't stand. Maybe I'm done, but somebody else won't be," he says modestly.

Akers' 1978 DHIA herd average stands at 19,201 pounds of milk, with a 3.9 per cent butterfat test and 750 pounds of butterfat on 57.7 cows. The milk from each of his cows was worth an average of \$2041 for the year, and the margin after feed costs is pegged at \$1194 per cow.

The record was established by paying close attention to details - being a little fussy - and through the cooperation of other members of his family. Says Akers: "I owe a lot of credit to the family. My son, Gary, is a very capable cow man and my wife helps too. It's a family operation and it takes a lot of cooperation."

Akers is also quick to give credit to his veterinarians. Claiming that southern Lancaster County can boast the best veterinary services in the country, he says: "The services they give us are appreciated. I have never lost a cow on account of a veterinarian not getting here. This is worth something. It helps. We have seven vets working in the area and they deserve recognition for the service they have given."

At home on a 158-acre farm which the family has named "Solanco Acres," Akers manages every aspect of the operation carefully. Thought and planning go into

(Turn to Page 26)



Ruth and Curtis Akers and son, Gary, do the work at "Solanco Acres," home of Lancaster County's top DHIA herd. The family was honored

Tuesday at a dinner marking the conclusion of the 1978 Red Rose DHIA year.

130 herds top 600 lbs. butterfat

By DIETER KRIEG
 LANCASTER — The rather exclusive "600 Club" of a decade or so ago is no longer so special, according to statistical information released this week by the Red Rose Dairy Herd Improvement Association. Of the 436 herds on test in Lancaster County, 130 topped the mark which was once thought of as the Mount Everest of the dairy industry. With a 600-pound butterfat average becoming quite common, new goals are being set. This year, seven Lancaster County dairy farmers turned in averages exceeding 700 pounds of butterfat. In some other Pennsylvania counties, butterfat averages of 800 pounds and more are being recorded.

Tops in butterfat production for the 1977-78 testing year in the Garden Spot was the Solanco Acres herd of registered Holsteins, owned by Curtis Akers and family of Quarryville. Their winning average on 57.7 cows was 19,201 pounds of milk and 750 pounds of butterfat. It is the highest DHIA butterfat average ever recorded in the Garden Spot.

The high herd average in milk production belonged to Paul H. Martin of Ephrata whose 36.8 registered Holsteins averaged 20,819 pounds of milk and 743 pounds of butterfat.

A variety of information is contained in the annual Red Rose DHIA report, which was made public Tuesday afternoon at the Association's annual awards banquet. It was held at the Good'n Plenty Restaurant, near here. While the complete report is not included in this article, it is summarized and features complete statistical information on all Lancaster County DHIA herds which had butterfat averages of 600 pounds or more.

Of the 436 herds on official test in Lancaster County, eight were above 700 pounds of butterfat, 19 eclipsed the 675-pound mark, 44 surpassed 650 pounds, 73 topped 625, and 130 had more than 600.

Akers, who is the subject of a page 1 feature story this week, commented that one of the most significant revelations of the report is that the five top herds achieved their records without the benefit of purchased animals. A progressive dairyman, he

(Turn to Page 21)

Beef heifer prices may increase

By JOAN LIESAU
 LITITZ - Although there have been recent booms in commercial bred heifer prices in sales out West, Pennsylvania appears to be slower in its momentum to build up replacement heifer stock.

According to James Mix, economist for the USDA, holding of heifers for herd replacements have been slow through most of 1978. But with the higher feeder cattle prices that producers

(Turn to Page 30)

In this issue

The Red Rose DHIA concluded its 1978 testing year. Aside from the two articles that begin on this page, there's another Red Rose DHIA article on page 18.

Hendrik Wentink, has some comments on the controversies surrounding egg advertising. See page 107.

War has been declared against antibiotic residues in slaughter cattle. See page 103.

Pennsylvania's business climate is nothing to brag about. The story on page 56 tells why.

Longwood Gardens in Chester County has a Christmas present for all. Details on page 108.

Farm Calendar	10	Ida's Notebook	54
Editorial Comments	10	Joyce Bupp	56
Homestead Notes	42	Cattle feature	56
Jr. Cooking Edition	44	Classifieds	57
Home on the Range	46	Energy Conservation	96
Farm Women Calendar	47	Life on the Farm	98
Plant Lovers Corner	49	Horse club banquet	100
Doris Thomas	49	Craft features	102,104,130
Recipe Swap	51	Jerry Webb	129
Kendy's Kolumn	53	Public Sales Register	135

Increase seen in egg prices

By KENDACE BORRY
 LITITZ — The retail price of eggs is up over that of a year ago, to the tune of about a twenty cent increase on the larger size eggs. Last November the Urner Barry quote for Grade A large eggs was 53 cents. On Thursday of this week, their market for the same size of eggs was quoted at 73 cents.

There seem to be a number of different reasons for the increase in prices. Producers agree that they

(Turn to Page 24)