

Guernseys are a way of life for the Witmers

By JOAN LIESAU
WILLOW STREET — Ray Witmer says he was introduced to the Guernsey breed as a youngster. "There have been Guernseys on this farm for over 130 years," he added. Witmer said the milk produced on the farm was sold to top customers when his father was in the business as a producer and distributor. Witmer said "We always seemed to get a premium for Guernsey milk after the war and we have received a premium for Guernsey milk to this day." Witmer now sells his milk to Turkey Hill. "Today it is certainly profitable because of the high butterfat differential," said Peter Witmer, who graduated from Penn State in 1974. Peter also likes the Guernseys because of their temperament. "I have worked around many different breeds in a show type setting," Peter said, "and, I have found the Guernseys to be a more docile, easier to work around animal."

Both father and son liked the efficiency of the moderate size cow. "You don't have the maintenance cost for supporting excess size to have the same amount of profit," they said. "We think Guernsey milk is superior in quality in solids and taste." Peter said "I am pleased to be producing a bottle of milk that has a higher number of solids than is required by the state." He quickly added however, that he appreciated a cow of any breed.

"We don't deny our breed doesn't have problems. I grant it is a slow process, but we are coming along faster by using predicted difference (of daughters over herdmates), better bulls and higher producing cows.

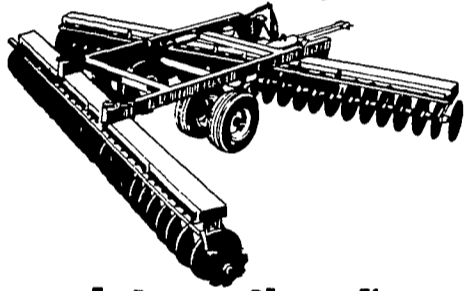
The Witmer's have 64 registered Guernseys on test with a rolling herd average of 13,120 pounds of milk. Their butterfat totals 642 pounds. Six of the cows are rated excellent, 26 very good and nine desirable.

(Turn to Page 20)



The Witmers have 65 Guernseys on test. They like the higher butterfat differential their breed gives.

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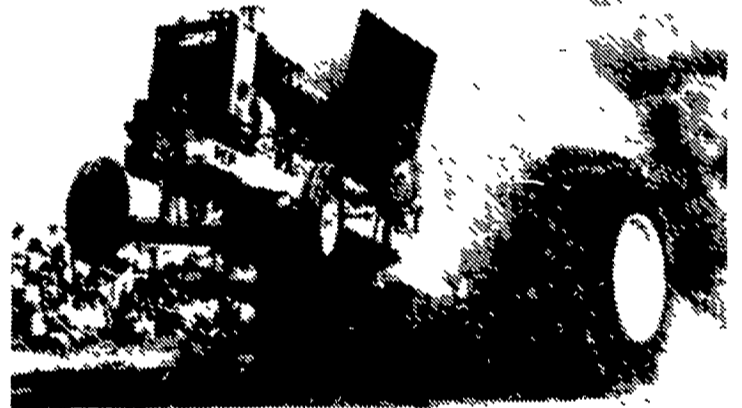
(Rain Date - June 23rd - 1:00 p.m.)

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(Rain Date - June 24th - 2:00 p.m.)

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