

Pork Chop Farm improves Chester White stock

By DEBRA STRICKLER
NEW HOLLAND—The Pork Chop Farm located south of New Holland represents a continual strive for breeding perfection of the Chester White purebred hog stock. The farm is owned and operated by Tony L. Folker with the assistance of his wife Edith.

Folker, a 1965 graduate of Garden Spot High School, has built his operation from two sows that he purchased for an FFA project while in

school. This farm is unique in that it consists of a purebred Chester White herd, an unusual finding in the eastern United States.

The original firing house was constructed by Folker while in school and is still in operation as a firing house today. It consists of sixteen wire crates in which the sow is placed while giving birth. This inhibits the loss of any new borns from a mother's carelessness.

Folker has expanded his

operation to include a nursery, finishing area, and housing for prospective breeding stock and boars. The firing house and portions of the nursery are heated by electric heat. For economic reasons, the Folker's are considering a switch to a gas heating system. In the future they hope to build a gestation building so that there complete operation will be confined. Presently, the sows are able to roam in an

open area.

The operation has developed despite an injury to Folker and feeding problems in recent years. Presently, the Pork Chop Farm includes 150 sows, and 10 boars. Recently, Folker has had the opportunity to purchase top quality boars and knows that they will vastly improve his herd.

One of these boars is known as "Power man", which was bought as a tested boar from Ames, Iowa in January of this year. It tested to be a high indexing boar with an excellent feed efficiency ratio. It has the same grand sire on both sides which contributes to Folker's strong maintenance of line breeding. In addition to the home stock, he maintains a part ownership of boars in Illinois and Minnesota. Folker is concerned with production and commercial boars.

Folker recently showed a boar in the Penn State performance test sale held in August at Penn State. This boar placed first and was the first auction boar he had in recent years. It was bought by an Oklahoma breeder.

Chester Whites have proven to be excellent breeders, according to Folker. The sows are docile, easy to work with, and durable. They have a longer and bigger frame which is today's trend in show pigs. He finds Chester boars to be aggressive and produce uniform herds.

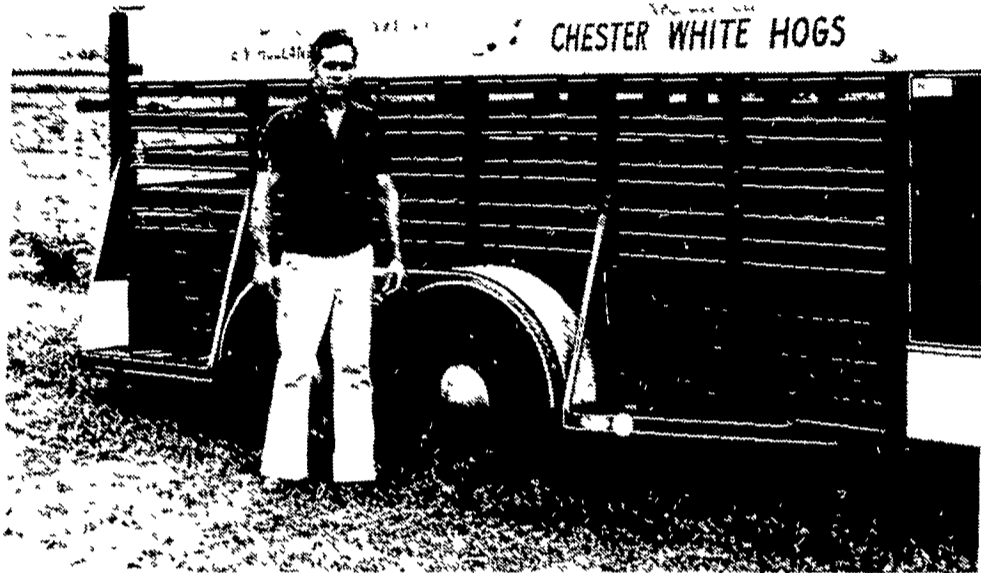
A firm believer in line

breeding, approximately 90 percent of Folker's herd has its basis with the Chester Foundation sow. This sow was born in December of 1971 and has recently been bred for its seventeenth litter. Folker has been able to mix her new borns with other litters because Chester Foundation has not maintained her mothering ability

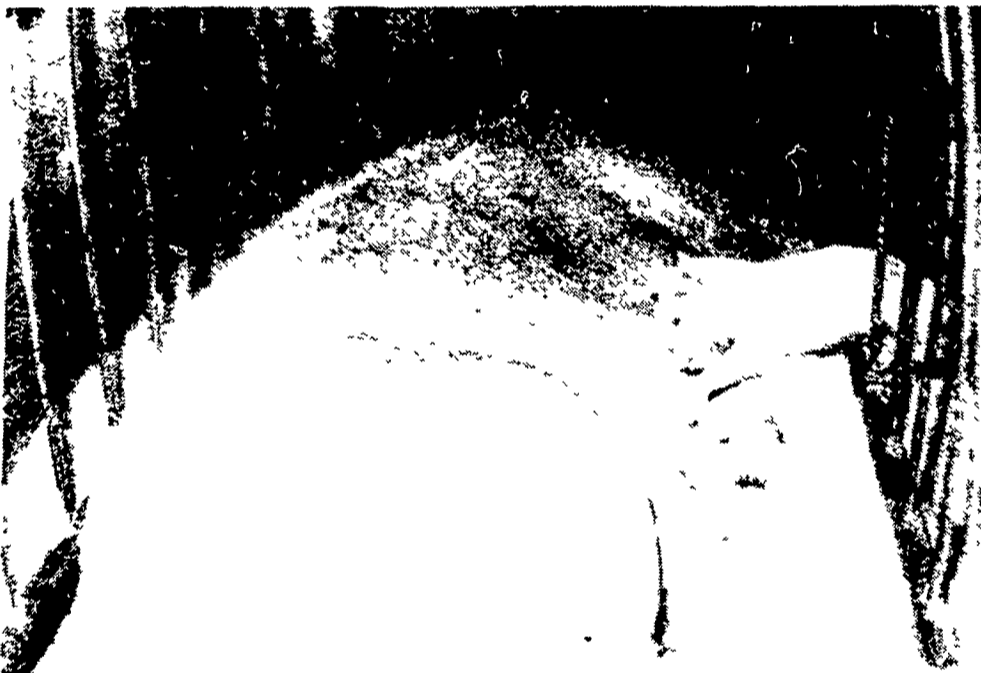
but is still able to produce excellent litters. The majority of sows are able to produce litters for three or four years.

Lone Ranger, was an older boar that has contributed to the line breeding of Chester Whites. It is known for its siring of good females with excellent mothering, and

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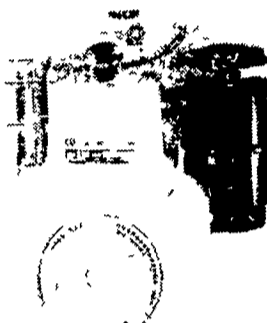
Tony L. Folker stands beside the trailer which will transport a barrow and boar to the National Barrow Show to be held in Austin, Minnesota this week.



A sow is nursing her first litter at the Pork Chop Farm, near New Holland, Pa. The newborns crawl under a metal frame to obtain their nourishment. The sow remains in the cage like structure which was constructed by Tony Folker.

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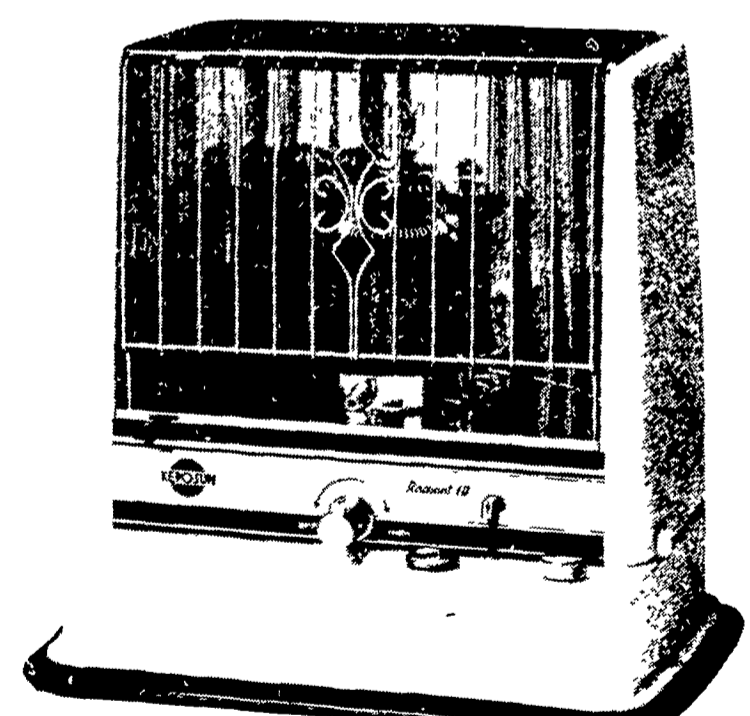
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