

Spring Bottom Farm

(Continued from Page D13)

realize I need to keep on showing at the local fairs and smaller shows."

Showing cattle is one of Darcey's interests and management tools, and so he likes to stay on top of any new ideas and changes. One of the new rules coming out of the American Polled Hereford Association has caused Darcey to sit back and smile. APHA is recommending at all state fairs that the senior heifers at Standard of Performance shows must be exhibited with a calf at their side.

"The grand champion cow chosen at those shows will be a cow that has proven to the judge that she can milk," Darcey said. "This new rule will help stop the changing of calf dates, too."

Darcey is currently serving his second term as president of the Pennsylvania Polled Hereford Association. He comments on the association and its members:

"There are about 900 people in Pennsylvania that own Polled Hereford cattle. Our association's mailing list has about 550 names. As far as paid members go, there are 110, out of which about 15 are active in the breed association's activities."

He pointed out that the association's Spring sale had to be cancelled because of lack of interest. The few who had planned to consign cattle at the Pennsylvania sale took their cattle to the Maryland Association's sale, instead.

Along with his PPHA duties, Darcey is an active member of the Adams



Frank and Becky Darcey relax at the Adams County Cattlemen's Association Bull Ball.

County Cattlemen's Association. He also gets involved in trying to improve conditions at Farm Show and Expo by making telephone calls to the Secretary of Agriculture and writing to the Farm Show Director.

In his 'spare' time, Darcey and his son operate their 300 acre farm, located close to the Mason-Dixon line southwest of the historic battlefields of Gettysburg.

The farm is managed mostly as pasture land, although a small amount of corn for the silc is raised on the farm.

Darcey said his brood cows are fed the silage, along with some hay. He added he has his silage analyzed so that he knows the protein content of his feed. If his protein levels are not high enough, he said, he

supplements the cows with a protein lick tank.

The feeding program for his replacement heifers is carefully planned, too. Darcey said he mixes three parts of oats to one part of corn, plus a protein supplement of 13-14 percent. He noted he buys his oats from 'upstate' because they have more protein and are better quality oats than if he grew them in Adams County.

Cattle aren't the only animals on Spring Bottom Farm. There are about 25 Shropshire ewes dotting the pastures, too, with new born lambs at their sides.

"The sheep are Becky's," Darcey said, "and she's trying to do the same thing with them as we did with the cattle." He remarked that in her five years as a shepherdess Becky has achieved 150 to 175 percent

live lamb crop, with emphasis on the word 'live'.

Becky took some of her sheep to the Farm Show for the first time this year. She said she didn't do well because she was unable to be there to show the sheep herself. However, in competition at the local fairs, Becky has won enough ribbons and trophies to start decorating her own wall of the farm office.

"When I got into the cattle business, I gave myself ten years to be on top or get out. Whatever a person does in their life, they ought to do it well or not at all. And, you've got to like what you're doing, or you'll be unhappy and it will reflect in your work," Darcey commented.

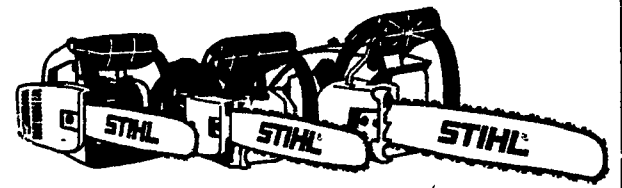
In his tenth year, after a shaky start with four wild Herefords and growing to be one of the top Polled Hereford breeders in the state, it seems like Darcey has met his persona deadline.

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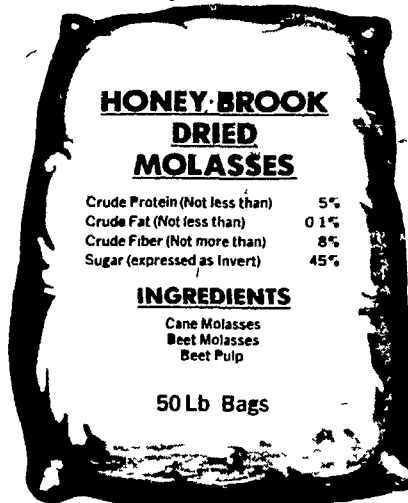
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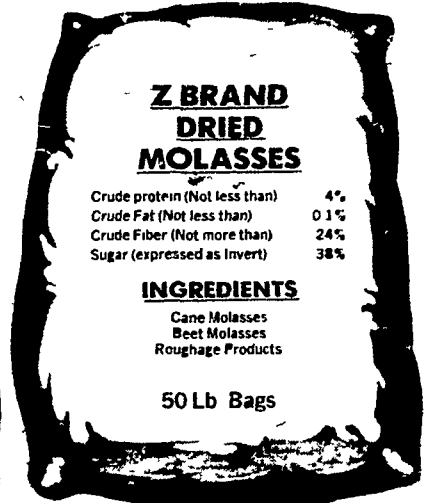
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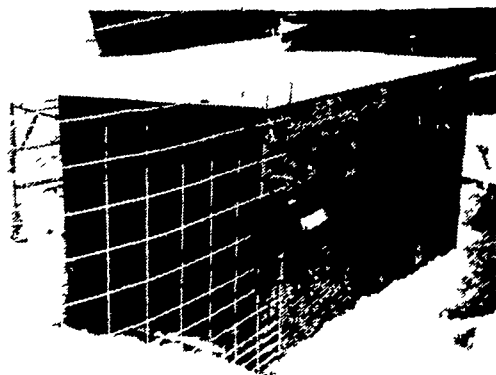


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