

480-foot heifer barn makes maximum use of sun

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN
WASHINGTON BORO — A 480-foot open-sided heifer barn being built on the Star Rock Farms of Abram and John Barley makes maximum use of both Mother Nature and man-made mechanical ingenuity to provide improved and more individual animal care.

The barn, which is in the final stages of construction north of their 376-foot-long free-stall barn, will have a capacity for about 300 head of heifers from the time they leave the calf hutches until they are bred and checked for pregnancy.

The construction began in late March and should be completed within the next few weeks.

The barn's layout scheme, which the Barleys based on existing plans but modified considerably to meet their own needs and accomplish their own purposes, offers the following features:

—Despite its immense size, the barn is equipped with swinging gates that can divide it into 40 individual, spacious pens.

—Opening to the south, the barn's location in relation to the angle of the sun and its steep-pitched roof make maximum use of solar drying of bedding and manure, providing the greatest amount of shade during the summer and the most sunlight during the winter.

—The barn will permit continued utilization of existing feeding and manure disposal systems.

—A variety of bedding will be able to be used in the barn and requirements will be about the same as for free stalls, with additions made about once a week. Also, mechanized distribution of bedding will be possible.

—It will be equipped with automatic head-locks in the feeding area which can be utilized for treatment and later breeding purposes. The head-locks will also swing out to permit loading and unloading into the individual pens of the barn.

—Division of the barn into the individual pens will even permit the housing of animals of all sizes, such as dry cows or bull calves which the Barleys are now raising.

The Barleys also have made a recent addition to their free-stall barn, which includes a sick bay and box stall. This new wing allows segregation of special cows, who may require extra attention due to problems, and permits separation of those cows being treated with antibiotics from the remainder of the milking herd.

"The new heifer barn is a modification of the VPI (Virginia Polytechnical Institute) counter-sloping plan," explains John Barley.

"But our raised bedding areas are flat and don't slope toward the scraping aisle.

"And we wanted everything under roof, including the feeding area.

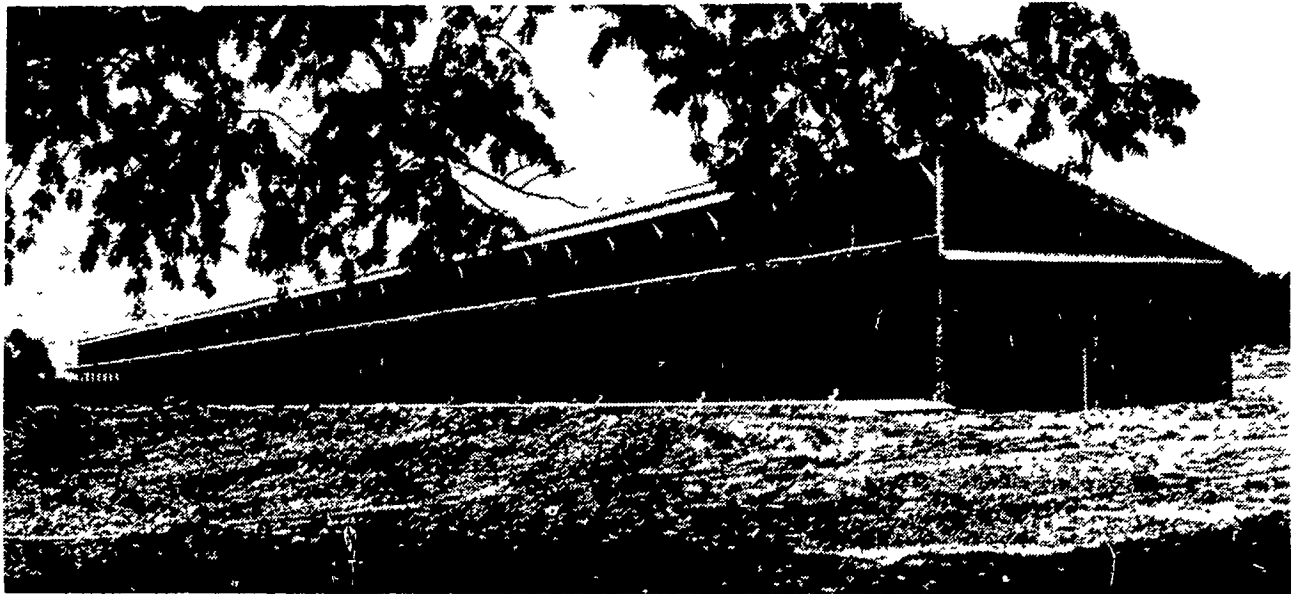
"The barn actually combines the best advantages of the VPI plan

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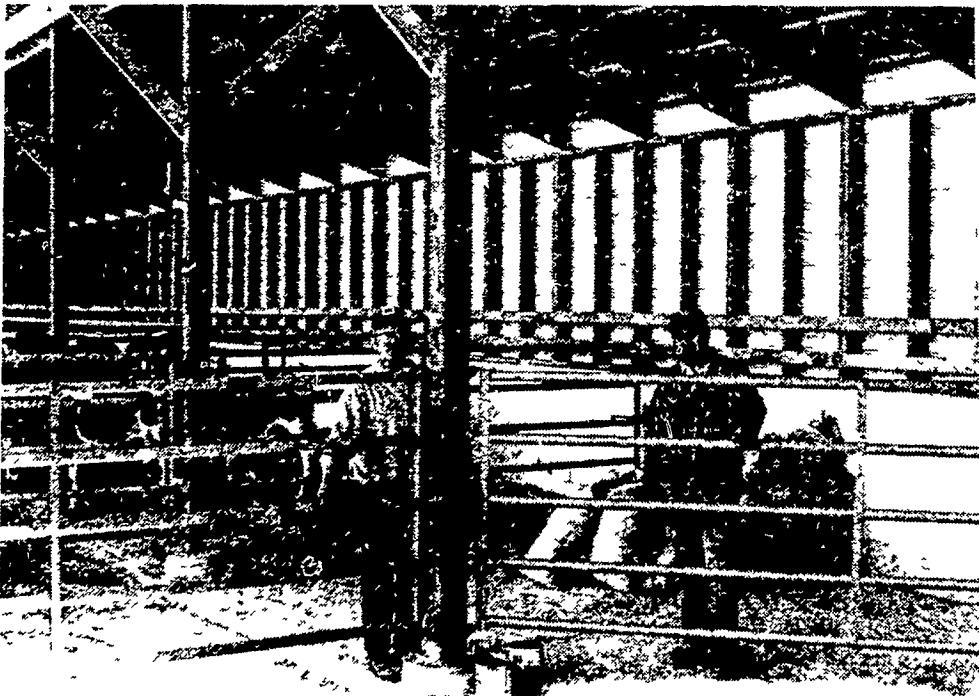
Overall view of Star Rock Farms shows 376 foot long freestall barn to the left and new 480 foot long heifer barn to the right. Construction on the new

heifer barn should be completed within the next several weeks.



Frontal view of the new heifer barn on the Barley Brothers' farm, Washington Boro, shows open-

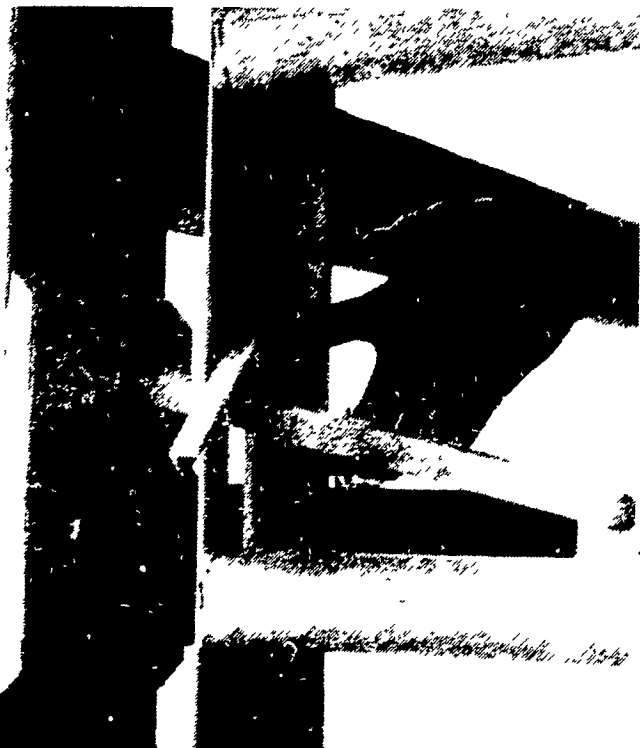
side facing South which makes maximum use of the sun to keep bedding dry and animals warm.



Swinging gates, which were fabricated right on the farm, are demonstrated by Abram, left, and John Barley.



Roof-covered feeding area is pointed out by Abram Barley, Jr. Adjustable head-locks will be installed later to replace the temporary plank enclosure.



Locking latch on the swinging gates, which separate the heifer barn into separate 12 foot pens, feature a safety device which should be calf-proof.



Individual pen show spacious heifer accommodations which include a 12 foot square bedding area and an equal sized space in the scraping aisle.