

Classification discussed at Ranck farm

BY SUSAN KAUFFMAN
Staff Correspondent

WAKEFIELD — "Since January of this year, every area has increased from fifteen to thirty-two per cent in numbers of animals being classified," said Holstein Association classifier William Hill, Jr. at the second of two barn meetings held this last week in Lan-

caster County.

The local barn meetings were planned by the county association to occur during the first week of the classifying schedule for herds at Eastern Pennsylvania. In all a total of twenty-nine classifiers will be working in the area for the next few weeks analyzing over 45,000

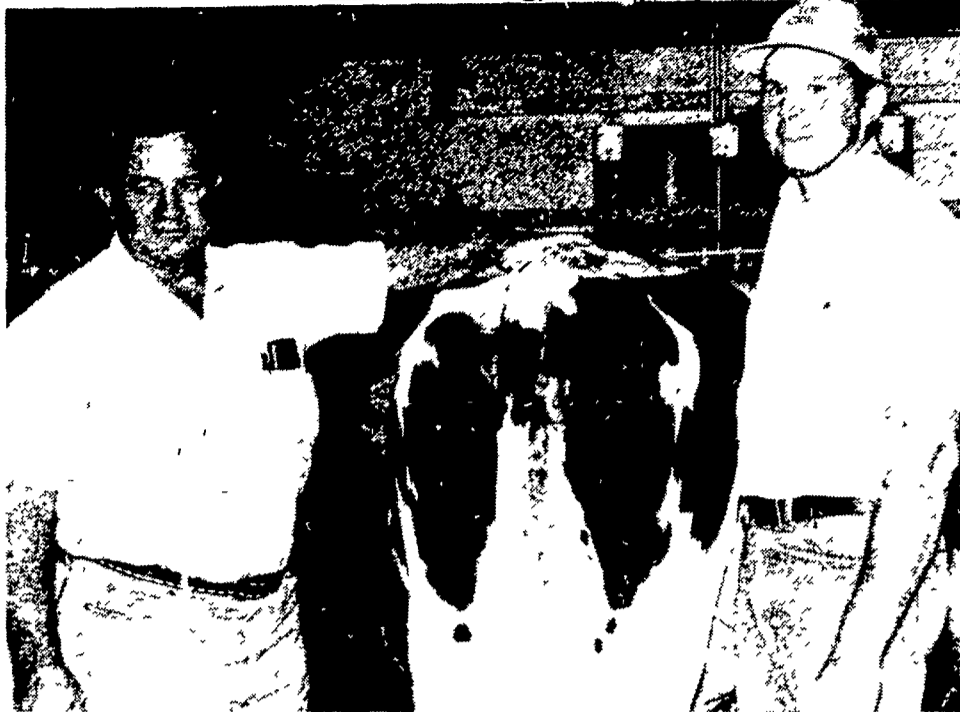
animals in some 900 herds.

Classifying, for those farmers who elect to participate, occurs every fifteen months at present. Classifier Hill explained the classification categories to the group which gathered at Jay Ranck's farm near Wakefield last Wednesday evening.

Hill, who has had a long history of working with cattle judging and showing, has been classifying one year with the Holstein Association. Immediately at the outset of his presentation Hill said classification to him was not the "Show ring" kind of thing. "I look for type and dairyness and longevity. Above all I look for functional udders which will hold up for many years. Teat placement and udder attachment paired with desirable legs and feet are what dairymen should be working for, he added.

Both Hill and state field representative Clarence Stauffer emphasized the use of classification as a tool to be used by the individual dairyman to upgrade his herd by choosing bulls to improve feet, legs, rump and udder. Classifying can also help the dairyman market his animals with more favorable economic or pricing criteria.

To assist better pricing of valuing of animals, Stauffer advised getting the pedigree packet from the Association as well. "This is the biggest bargain the Association has to offer," Stauffer said. For three dollars a cow, the dairyman can order the printed pedigree at classification time and then use it to evaluate a



Classifier William Hill, left, talked with Jay Ranck at his farm last Wednesday during the Lancaster County Holstein Association's barn meeting. Hill explained classification procedures to the group.

marketing price for his animals on a highly competitive basis.

Another program the Association offers is the Herd Builder service which helps in picking out bulls to help improve the existing herd by using data from recent classification results. The dairyman makes the final decisions on what bulls to use.

Several comments during the evening meeting centered around sire summaries, their data, prices to pay for semen and better selection on the part of the individual dairyman.

A possible nine-month classification schedule rather than the longer fifteen month interval now in effect

could effect bull proofs in the future. "Stauffer said too many two year olds who do not stay in a herd because of low test or other culling qualities never get classified so bull proofs are missing these animals in the data.

Stauffer posed the question, "What is too expensive when you talk about choosing a bull?" He suggested that a rule of thumb might be the price the farmer receives for a veal calf at market. He said two units of semen per cow is the average to get a calf. Therefore, with present market rates what they are, forty dollars per semen unit is not too expensive, Stauffer said. He added that animals with better pedigrees con-

tinue to increase in market value so it depends what the dairyman wants the calf for. If he wants to sell stock, the better the bull the higher the market price.

Stauffer also advised the group that bulls with forty and fifty per cent repeatability should be picked like young sires. Get a three generation pedigree to help in selection rather than base selection upon production of only a few daughters, he said.

Classifier Hill said the recent increase in classification of herds is a direct result of the economic advantage of working with and marketing animals with the paperwork from classification and pedigree.

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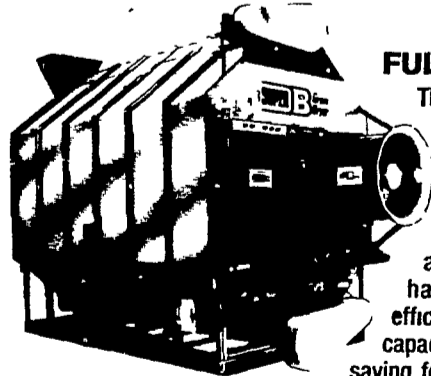
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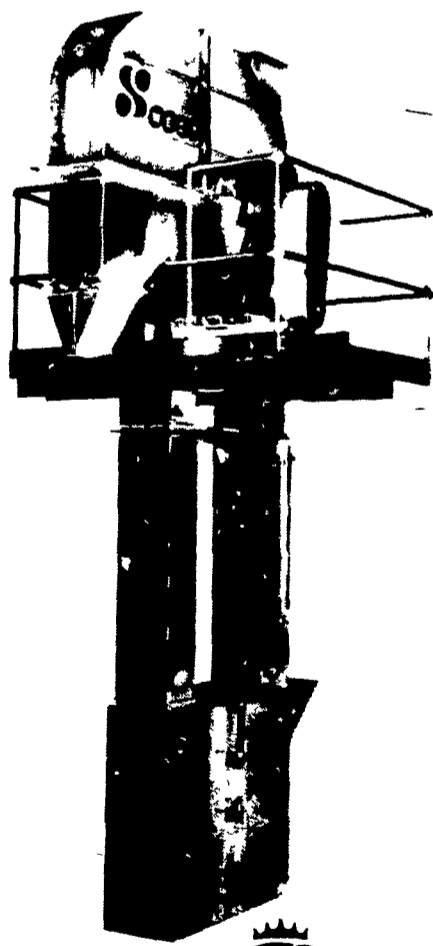
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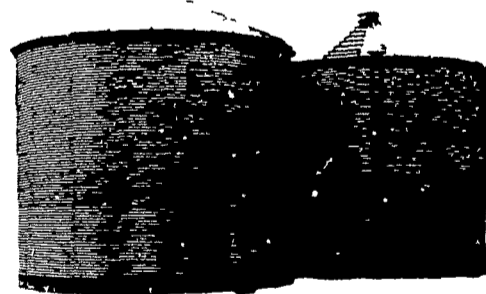
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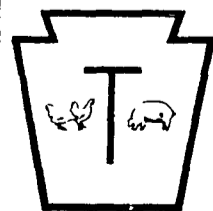
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