

# jobs

## Lebanon farmers, businessmen swap jobs

he was introduced to a relatively new management tool — embryo transplanting. He also walked through Bollinger's broiler house, and got a second lick at feeding and milking.

The 44 dairy cows at Willow Maple are all registered Holsteins with a DHI record of 20,500 pounds milk and 698 fat. "Our cows have been the highest herd in milk production in Lebanon

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### Moyer, Kelly exchange

LEBANON — Albert Moyer, dairy farmer, was the next to participate in the job exchange. He learned what it's like to manage a large department store when he sat behind the desk of Fred Kelly, manager of Sears Roebuck and Co. for a day.

Moyer had a pleasant surprise when his work day

began at 9 a.m. rather than his usual 5 a.m. for milking.

Sitting through a meeting of floor supervisors, Moyer said he was reminded of the importance of discussing problems candidly between employees, and together with management looking for solutions.

"When you walk through the store as a customer,

you're not aware of all the things that are going on behind the scenes," he remarked. "Stores, like farms, have problems — inventory problems and customer relations.

"Here at Sears, if the employees have a criticism, they bring it to management's attention. They're not afraid to talk up.

"I never realized how critical open communication was in running an operation. I plan to adopt this into my farm operation with my three employees. We'll get together as a group when ever the need arises. Talking as a group rather than with individuals will help to avoid conflicting stories."

Moyer said he also was impressed with the computer system at Sears, and said he may look into putting a small one into his operation. "I liked the idea that all the information was available at the touch of the button."

When comparing farm-city experiences with shoplifting and theft, Moyer said he relies on observant neighbors, good visibility, and, above all, a good dog.

Fred Kelly stated that he feels fortunate that the Sears store he manages is in Lebanon County. "The

people here are family oriented — it's a religious community — so we have a low crime rate."

He pointed out his department store has problems paralleling those experienced on farms. "Our problem is getting everything done without things breaking down."

After the store closed its management doors for the day, Kelly accompanied Moyer to his dairy operation north of Lebanon. That evening Moyer introduced Kelly to a dairy and poultry operation owned by neighbor Robert Lentz.

The next morning found Kelly up and anxiously awaiting his debut in the barn. "Even though we only got to bed around midnight, I was up and dressed before Al knocked on my door at 4 a.m."

Kelly assisted Moyer with milking 90 head of Holstein cows, 75 percent of which are home bred. Then at 6:30 a.m., they went over Moyer's DHI and breeding records while eating breakfast.

"The belief that dairy farmers come in and take a cat nap after milking just isn't the case," Kelly chuckled. "That time is spent doing paper work

Farmers nowadays are much more sophisticated businessmen."

Kelly commented that through the exchange, he has gotten a closer look at the farm community. "This has been a rough year for farmers in our area, and it's reflected in the community's business. The formula for farming and for commercial business is the same, although farmers have more variables to deal with — they're marketing a different kind of merchandise.

"This year farmers have the same operating costs to contend with, but they see their feed, electricity and fuel costs keep going up. At Sears, we have to work with the same percent factors, but farmers have less control on their income. They can't control prices, so they're not as flexible — they can't adjust prices to cover costs."

Back in the barn at 8:30 a.m., Kelly helped Moyer with the feeding, done for the most part automatically.

Moyer's operation is slightly different from most Lebanon County dairy farmers. Instead of owning a farm, Moyer leases 450 acres of cropland. He rents the farm and buildings that house his cattle and

equipment from Alfred Brandt, on a yearly basis.

Since he took over the Brandt farm in 1974, Moyer said, there were two new silos erected. The barn also underwent some remodeling, with comfort stalls being converted into a free stall setup with a California-type milking stall.

Moyer's herd, which is 95 percent registered, has a record of 16,000 pounds of milk and 640 pounds fat for 305 days. His two top producing cows are Paula and Rhea, both five-year-olds with 24,000 pounds milk records. Both cows were sired by Arbandale Maple David.

This bull was sired by Citation R Maple out of one of Moyer's two excellent cows, eleven-year-old Delight. Moyer's other excellent cow, six-year-old Orna, is also sired by Citation R Maple.

Moyer's current breeding program is making use of a heat synchronization management tool. "I used to run a bull with my heifers, but now I realize I can upgrade my herd faster by breeding even my first calf heifers with proven sires."

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the moist silage. Partners at father Harold Bollinger.



Albert Moyer changed hats recently and turned from dairyman to store manager.

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