

Dairy partners

decided to milk three times a day, something the arrangement allows easily.

Lamar says three times a day milking had been on his mind for several years, but he was unable to implement it when he was milking alone in rented facilities. Now, Harold takes the 6:00 a.m. milking with Lamar milking at 2:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

It takes just one person to milk their 60 cows with the bucket system they use. Lamar said, "Neither of us wanted a pipeline because we like to see how much milk they give. Often I weigh each time I milk."

The three times daily milking just began in September so Lamar says it's too early to make a judgement. He says, "We can't tell yet, but they are definitely giving more milk. You have to feed more but we believe that the more you feed, according to production, the more money you will make."

Lamar says they want to give the milking routine a year before making a final decision. "If we come to the point where it is not doing good for us anymore we wouldn't hesitate to quit. Right now we have no plans for quitting."

He said the extra work that goes with three times a day milking doesn't bother them because they have just 71 acres of land to farm. "We have time," he states, adding that his father does most of the field work and he is happy to do most of the care of the cows. It takes about 1 hour and 45 minutes at each milking.

Both men enjoy the

flexibility of the milking schedule and since they both handle the cows one can easily take over for the other to give time off. They use three units and the milk is stored in separate bulk tanks.

They each have their own 400 gallon bulk tank and the tanks sit side by side in the expanded milk house. They ship to Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative, which readily agreed to the arrangement.

"We both had our own tanks and we kept them," Lamar explains.

Lamar feels one of the strengths of both herds is their compact, tight udders. He says, "Both herds have fairly small udders which is one reason why we thought we'd try three times a day milking."

The only difficulty they have encountered so far is a rule in the Red Rose Dairy Herd Improvement Association which does not allow two herds to be housed in one barn. They are allowed on official test and have official records, according to Lamar, but the Association does not include the herds in their published records.

Both Lamar and his father feed complete rations, but they feed their herds separately. Lamar feeds a 20 percent protein grain mix and his father a 14 percent mix. Lamar purchases alfalfa hay which he feeds at 20 pounds, and his father grows a timothy-clover mix which he feeds at 11 pounds. Lamar purchases silage from his father and feeds 12 pounds while his father feeds 28 pounds.

Keep pigs warm

NORRISTOWN — Growing and finishing pigs need a warm place to lay if they are to gain efficiently. Make sure they are warm enough so they spread out in the sleeping area and don't pile up, reminds Nancy M. Kadwill, Montgomery County Agent.

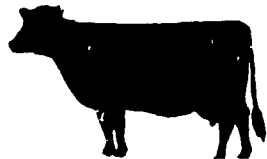
Insulated side walls and solid partitions in the sleeping areas helps keep them warm. In cold buildings, hovers may be necessary to keep them from piling up.

Hovers need to be managed. The colder the buildings and outside temperature, the deeper

hovers need to be. As the temperature warms up, some of the hovers need to be removed.

Failure to manage these hovers can cause pigs to get overheated or stay too cold causing them to pile up.

Sows need the same attention if you want to save feed. A warm sleeping area can save two or more pounds of feed per day per sow, adds Kadwill.



The feed rations are purchased from Grubb's Feed Supply, and Nevin Gish has worked closely with the rations. Lamar states, "We appreciate the good job he does for us. The cows respond well and are really healthy."

Having worked as a breeding technician and still working as a substitute, it is natural that Lamar does the breeding in both herds, and even makes the selections of bulls for his own herd and his father's. In selecting bulls for mating, Lamar says he feels it is most important to breed for proper type. If you have the correct dairy type, milk will come along, he said.

In choosing bulls, Lamar looks for bulls which are plus over two points in type.

They have to sire outstanding udders and real good stature, he says. I look for those two things and to see that they are reasonably high in test. He also looks for bulls which are 1,000 pounds plus in milk but says that if they are tremendous in type they don't have to be that high.

Both he and his father classified, with Lamar having a BAA of 102.9 and Harold having 103.4. Lamar states, "I am working to improve that."

Calving is done differently in the two herds. Both men raise all their heifer calves, but Harold uses the more conventional methods of raising them in the barn and Lamar chooses to raise his in hutches. The next plan is to build a heifer barn because of overcrowded conditions in their current heifer barn.

Lamar adds, "I would like to merchandise my animals and make some consignments." He reports that his father has had buyers from several states and he is interested in following along those same lines.

Newly elected to the Board



Lamar Witmer's favorite job is milking cows, and here he puts the milker on Honey, a second-calf heifer giving 90 pounds of milk daily on a three-times per day milking routine.

of Directors of the Lancaster County Holstein Association, Lamar feels it is a privilege to serve in that capacity and expressed surprise at his election. He is also a member of the Pennsylvania Farmers Association.

So far, both Harold and Lamar are enthusiastic about their unusual arrangement, and while they had never heard of it before, they have since read of several other examples where fathers and sons are working together under similar conditions.

Lamar says, "I would recommend it. It might be the answer for other people who don't know what to do. It is more efficient because we share the equipment." It is also obviously a way to milk cows without having the heavy investment in farm land and equipment.

Mrs. Witmer pointed out, "Lamar has more incentive because he has his own herd."

Agreeing, Lamar said, "I'd rather have my own herd and make decisions myself. I am more minded to keep a smaller type herd and

build quality, not quantity. We have 60 cows between the two of us, and I wouldn't like to take care of more than 60."

There seems to be no communication gap, which is obviously an important factor in deciding to work

together with father and son. Lamar says, "I think we get along okay."

For this father-son team, sharing facilities is an uncomplicated way to work together in the complicated business of running a modern dairy operation.

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