

# Neither rain nor snow stops milk haulers

PHILADELPHIA — five degrees outside with icy road conditions. For those who must get moving, it's 8:05. Now, here's more music."

It's going to be rough enough struggling from the house to the barn this morning.

Briefly the dairyman wonders if Jim will be showing up today, then the thought skips from his mind. Jim always seems to make it.

All across the Mid-Atlantic dairy belt other farmers struggle out of bed and cast a brief thought for their milk hauler who'll brave rotten weather on deteriorating roads to empty the bulk tanks on their farms.

The most important link between the dairy farmer and dairy processing plant is the hauler—the truck driver who picks up milk from farms and unloads it at the dairy.

Jim Wood, Jr., is such a hauler. At 5 a.m. he is ready to begin his day, rain or shine, snow or sleet. For those farms with daily service, his visits are more punctual and constant than the postman's.

He readies his International truck — checking fuel, making certain he has enough sample bottles, inspecting hoses and pump — today he will pick up milk from 13 dairy farms in Delaware and Maryland before delivering the load to Abbotts Dairies in Philadelphia.

The big rig lumbers along in the

pre-dawn light, then slows down as Wood steers the tractor-trailer into a lane leading to his first farm. Backing the trailer to a cement block milk house, Wood explains the procedure.

First, I wash my hands before checking the smell of the milk in the tank. Then I check the temperature to make sure the milk is less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, Wood explained.

Next he uses an instrument that resembles a metal yardstick to determine the amount of milk in the tank. He dips the stick into the tank of milk, then lifts it out and notes the measure.

A chart located nearby in the milk room converts the reading to pounds of milk. Wood marks the poundage for the farmer's records as well as his own.

Before taking the butterfat and bacteriological sample, Wood engages an agitator inside the tank.

This device insures that butterfat in the milk is properly mixed—otherwise, the sample could incorrectly reflect the milk's butterfat content. That butterfat percentage is extremely important in determining the value of the milk. On the average, milk is three and one-half per cent butterfat.

While the agitator is working, Wood attaches gummed labels bearing the farm name onto plastic sample bottles. He then uses a long dipper to pull a sample from the

tank, filling and emptying the cup two or three times before filling the bottle.

All's ready to load the truck. As the pump kicks in, milk is rapidly inhaled by the tanker. Leaving only the gurgling sound of thirsty vacuum before Wood kills the switch.

Although the milk truck is now ready for departure, Wood's job is not finished. He must rinse the milk tank, his dipper and his hands before leaving the milk house as neat and clean as he found it. Then he curls the hose into the rear compartment of the tanker-truck, packs the milk sample and dipper, and drives away.

The entire procedure takes from 12 to 20 minutes.

That's the way it is, from one dairy farm to the next. Pick up, milk drive to the next farm, repeat. Then finally, drive to Philadelphia—near Veterans Stadium and the Spectrum—unload and wash the tanker, then head home.

Today, the 19,000 pound truck hauled about 48,000 pounds of milk—or in other terms, 5600 gallons.

That's the life of a hauler—repetition. Repetition, that is, relieved by sunrises, morning chats with easy-going

dairyman treacherous ice patches that can cause a tractor-trailer to jack-knife, watching the world wake each morning, that steaming cup of coffee and donut supplied by a friendly farm wife, a relief farm tractor that assists the rig through an unplowed winter lane, weekend traffic jams caused by Philadelphia sports fans.

Jim, Jr., has known no other life. His father broke into the hauling business under his father, who began hauling in 1929. Back then, milk was hauled in cans—and milk was not as sanitary and the temperature could not be controlled as well as today.

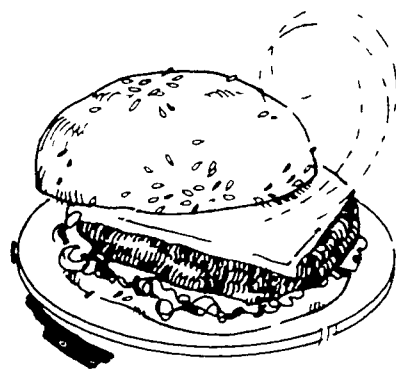
Now, the Newark-based hauling operation utilizes three trailers and four tractors to serve dairy

farmer members of Inter-State Milk Producers Cooperative.

Wood is a licensed weigher and sampler—as are all his drivers. These days, he operates as the relief driver. He doesn't try to run trucks from behind a desk, instead, he sees every farmer at least once a week.

If the farmer has any complaints, Wood can either handle it or refer the farmer to a fieldman. He feels it is important to maintain a face-to-face relationship with the people whose milk he handles.

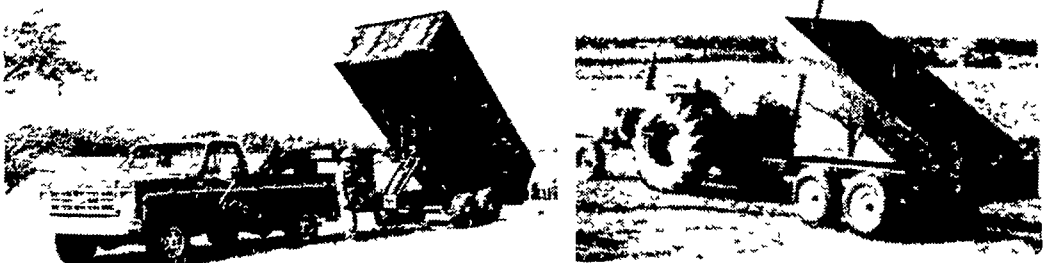
Because of his conscientiousness and dedication—and that of all the people involved in supplying milk—consumers are able to drive down to a corner store and buy that carton of milk in both ice and sunny weather.



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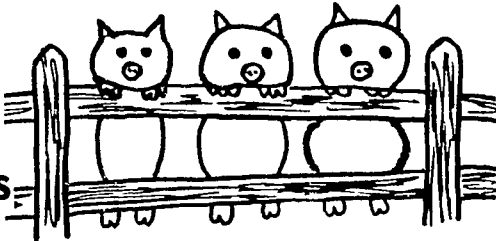
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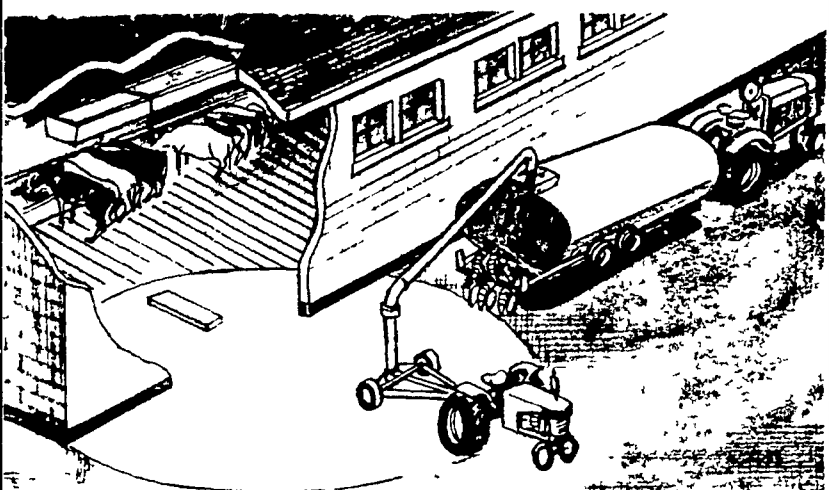
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8,000	8'0"	21'6"	1/4"	6,475	2230.00
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