

Moor builds travel ideas into new dairy barn

NEWARK, Dela. — For Barbara Moor, the best thing about a trip to Europe is the chance to catch up on the latest developments in manure storage and biogas technology. Obviously not an average tourist, Barbara and husband Alfred Moor, Jr. farm 2000 acres near Kenton, Delaware.

Great believers in the advantages of diversity, the Moors produce corn, soybeans, wheat, peas, lima beans, sweet corn, and milk. They also do custom work, and even keep race horses as a hobby.

There's always lots to be done, particularly since Barbara also puts in a 40-hour week in the office of a local supermarket. By the end of summer she's ready for a well-earned vacation, Barbara signs up for George Haenlein's Extension dairy and farm tours.

Each August, Haenlein leads a group of interested farmers and others on an educational tour of innovative, energy-efficient farms, agricultural experiment stations, cheesemaking operations, and the like. The itinerary seems tailor-made for a farmer like Barbara, who likes to look for better ways of getting a job done. Barbara's travels paid off last

year when she and her husband decided to build a new dairy operation from the ground up. Having visited many farms in surrounding states as well as in Europe, Barbara knew what she wanted: an attractive, energy-efficient barn with low maintenance needs; good cow traffic flow; a hospital area for sick cows, blood tests and maternity; and the latest in labor-saving devices and sanitation.

With these ideas in mind, she sat down with dairy equipment dealer Grerar Bennett, builder Sam Yoder, and his assistant Eric Rambo of Sam Yoder and Son Co.

Having begun his career as a chicken catcher, Yoder had always specialized in broiler houses. His company had never built a dairy barn. But like Bennett, Yoder and Rambo were willing to try to put Moor's idea in operation.

The new building is a good-looking, shiny red structure on the outside, but its real beauty is in its engineering.

The barn is open on one side, and has an overshot roof with open side ventilators.

The barn features 145 free-stalls in a double-six herringbone pattern.

The milking parlor has weigh jars below the level of the cows, a feature Haenlein has been advocating for years. Gravity flow aids in the production of quality milk. Milk has a better flavor when it doesn't have to be lifted, which adds oxygen to the milk and causes off flavors.

What's more, a weigh jar holds a cow's entire production before it is released into the milk line. This not only makes it easy to see how much milk each cow produces each day, but also makes it possible to discard any problem milk before it gets into the tank. The dairy specialist says weigh jars can spell the difference between profit and loss in a dairy business.

One of Bennett's suggestions was to add a new backflush system to the automatic cleaning equipment for the milk lines and machinery. The backflush system cleans the milking machinery after each cow, thereby helping to prevent mastitis, the most serious problem cutting into the dairy farmer's profits.

Automatic milk take-offs also help maintain sanitation, besides

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Barbara Moor, and husband, Alfred, of Kenton, Delaware incorporated many of the latest dairy ideas into their new barn. One of their 'must-haves' was a special maternity area and pens for treating sick cattle.

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