

Daniel Martin produces, directs

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

MANHEIM — Too often it's assumed that to be successful in the dairy realm - or any farming operation - one must be raised in an atmosphere of solid hard work, inherit a hand-me-down farm, or grow up being as indispensable to the family farm as the milking machines are.

Not so for Daniel Martin of Manheim who has been farming for 35 years - he wasn't raised on a farm. But he says simply, when speaking of his reasons, "I guess a person pursues his interests."

And Martin's latest interest has landed him one of his greatest accomplishments - he recently was elected to the boards of directors of United Dairy Industry Association and National Dairy Council at the organizations' annual meetings in Washington D.C.

Not one to waste words, Martin says of his position, "Responsibilities just work into other responsibilities."

He then estimated that one-third of his time is spent working at his several positions. They include: vice president of Inter-State Milk Producers Co-op, vice president of Dairy Council, Inc. in Southampton, secretary of Federal Order 4 Advertising and Promotion Agency and a director for Holly Milk Co-op. He has been recognized as Lancaster County's "Outstanding Young Farmer" and is active as Sunday School superintendent with the Manheim Mennonite Church.

"I began to get involved during the slump of the 60's. So I joined a

co-op then became director. This led to another position and then another," he explained.

Martin stands his ground and speaks his mind when it comes to dairy promotion.

"Somebody has to get involved, so I did. We need to impress the public with the value of milk, he added. "We need to improve the adult program. The 'Cows of America' program was a disaster and I expressed my opinion about it right away. It wasn't aimed at the dairy farmer, just youth."

"The new campaign, 'milk, the fresher, refresher,' is better, but we still need to do work. The local theme of the 'soft, soft drink' is the most effective advertising milk's ever had. I'd like to see the national organization improve promotion and act as a clearing house for local units' programs," he admonished.

Martin's 350 acre farm, known as "Danda" is under partnership between he and youngest son, Dave. Until last year, the partnership had included his other son, Dan Jr., but Dan purchased his own farm in Cumberland County.

The new director and his son own 100 head of Holstein cows, milking 55, which produce more than 825,000 pounds of milk annually (average is 15,000 pounds of milk and 580 pounds of fat). They also have 150 steers and a 50,000 broiler operation. They raise corn, soybeans, hay and wheat. Tobacco also used to be a regular crop.

But Martin says of tobacco, "We stopped because of the work load and also because we decided we

may as well not raise a crop we don't even promote."

Why so many areas in the Martin farming operation?

"I guess we're like typical Lancaster County farmers, we believe in diversification," he answered. But he added that his broiler operation is only two years

old and that all the steers are sold every spring.

When asked why he milks Holsteins, especially since family tradition couldn't have spurred him into it, he said, "I feel they're the best producing cow for the type operation we have. Statistics prove that."

Though they have no bulls in AI service, Martin says he uses mostly AI but keeps a bull for hard to settle cows.

The calves are raised in hutches. Martin explains, "We had a very steep mortality problem before, but now we get a much healthier calf. I think bovine is so suscep-



Daniel Martin, new director for United Dairy Industry, stands beside a Holstein calf on his "Danda" farm. Martin's interest doesn't stop

at producing milk from these Holsteins, but it extends to promotion and management also.

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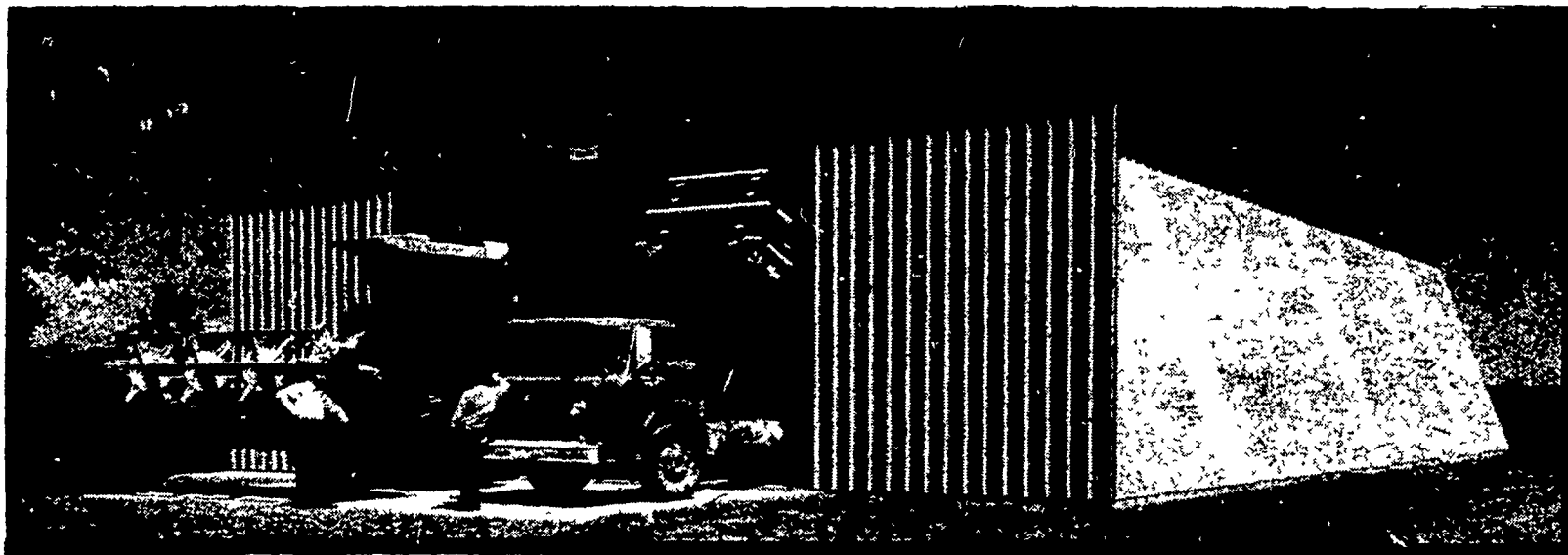
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