

Eighth generation

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"The cows were letting down so much milk at such a rate that the milkers couldn't take it away fast enough. As a result, the milk would flood the claws.

At the same time, the milking unit was set up to pulsate all four quarters at once. This pressure change in the teat forced milk back up in the udder. The constant irritation set up the environment for the coliform to flourish. Coliform can kill a cow if she's not resistant, notes Donald.

This severe infection warranted immediate action on the part of Bollingers. Dealing with the equipment problem meant installing a 2-inch pipeline to replace the original 1½-inch line, and switching from simultaneous pulsation to alternating pulsators.

Dr. Anderson advised the Bollingers that each cow was to be injected with a vaccine made from her individual milk culture. These injections were administered once every 10 days until the infection cleared up.

Since then, as a preventative measure, each animal on the Bollinger milking string is treated with this cultured mastitis vaccine twice a year to help build up her resistance. The shots are given at freshening and when the cow is dried off. If an individual animal should develop a problem case of mastitis during her lactation, she is treated more frequently.

"What's nice about this type of mastitis control is that you don't have to hold the milk after treating a cow — there's no antibiotics. And, it costs less than \$5 per cow per year," notes Donald. That's cheap insurance.

The Willow Maple milking herd

has one more thing going in favor of mastitis control — they're not bedded on straw or sawdust. Instead, these ladies rest on rubber mats.

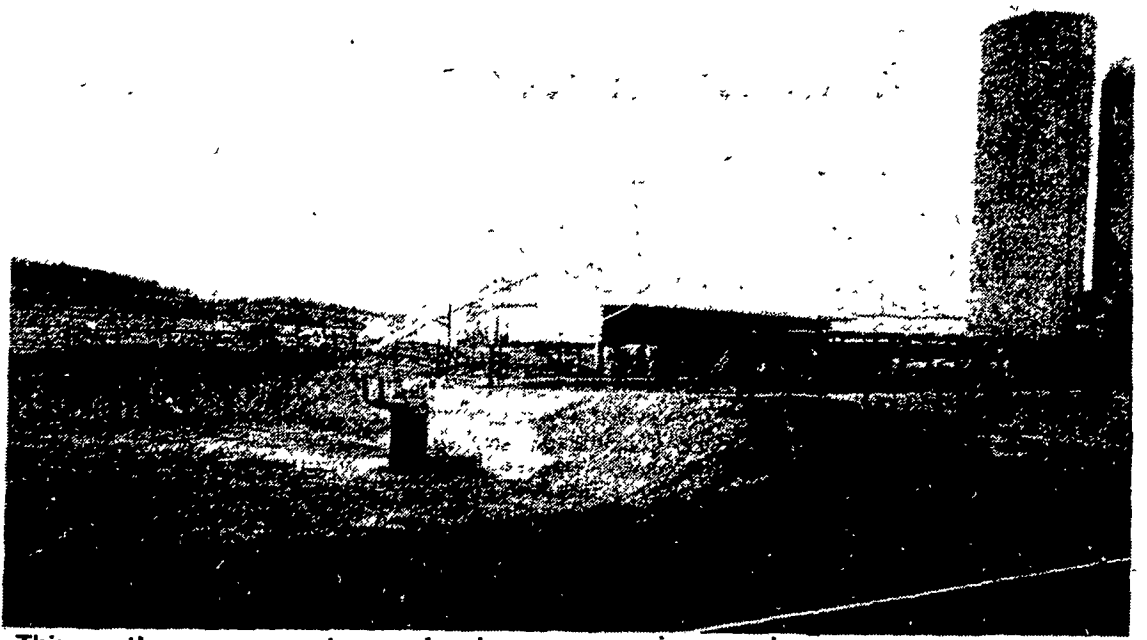
A grate covers the manure gutter that runs behind the stalls, and helps keep the cows up out of the manure. The gutter cleaner carries the manure from the barn to a closed manure pit. There the manure is mingled with milk house water and, after agitation, is pumped to a six-month-storage lagoon. A fan keeps gases out of the barn while the mixing and pumping takes place.

This earthen lagoon, which was finished last September, is the latest in a long line of conservation practices installed on the Bollinger farms. Their present 161 acres of limestone and shale ground also bears witness to good management, with contour strips wrapping across the steeper slopes and a sod waterway carrying excess surface water safely across a corn field.

No-till planting and chisel plowing are conservation practices also employed in growing the necessary livestock feed needed to keep the Willow Maple cows at their peak. The corn acreage is harvested mostly as silage, although some is shelled and stored in a metal bin.

Up until this year, the Bollingers had stored their shelled corn in a heap on the second floor of the barn. It was treated with propionic acid to prevent spoilage. But the Bollingers discovered that this acid was "killing the butterfat."

"Nobody had enough experience with this acid treatment to tell us for sure if this was what was causing our butterfat to drop,"



This earthen manure storage pond was completed last September and holds a six-month buildup of milkhouse water, barnlot scrapings, and manure from the stanchion barn.

explains Donald. "But when we quit feeding the corn, our butterfat jumped from an average of 3.37 in September to 3.78 in October."

Since then the Bollingers have learned that a slump in butterfat was found when cattle in a study were fed alfalfa hay treated with 2 pounds of propionic acid per ton. The Bollinger corn was treated with ½ pound of the acid per bushel and top producers were getting 12-15 pounds of corn per day.

Needless to say, the Bollingers dropped the acid and opted for the metal bin.

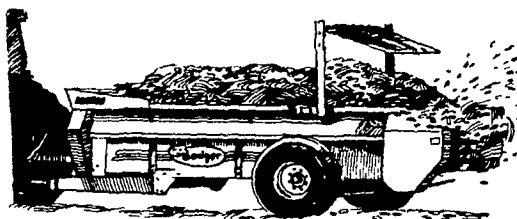
Along with their dairy operation, the Bollingers also raise broilers in two houses built in 1966 and 1969.

So future generations of Bollingers will have the background for both industries — dairy and poultry. Already 7-year-old Steven Bollinger, Donald and

Rosene's son, is tagging along to the barn, watching his father and grandfather keenly. And daughter Angie, 11, is participating in the 4-H club activities.

With all the next two generation's help near at hand, does Harold Bollinger ever consider retiring?

Indeed not, stresses Harold. "Then I'd have to start jogging," he laughs, "and I couldn't stand that."



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