

Red Wing Farm takes ribbons for brown eggs

BY LAUREL SCHAEFFER
Staff Correspondent

FLEETWOOD — To anyone who has ever looked closely at the egg exhibits shown during the Farm Show, Red Wing Farm, Fleetwood, should be a familiar name. This laying operation with a capacity for 45,000 birds has been showing their produce at the Farm Show successfully since the mid 1960s.

As explained by owner, operator, Gordon Yorgey and wife, Fern, they usually win blue ribbons and superior quality awards every year. Except for that one year when their entries in the egg category got too cold, lowering their quality.

The Yorgeys have no deep secrets regarding their success. They are just careful when making their selections for exhibition. Entries must be uniform in size

and shape, are candled but not washed, and of high quality. The eggs chosen for the trip to Harrisburg are selected one or two days prior to the show and are as fresh and clean as possible. "It's a chore to select the eggs we are going to show," Mrs. Yorgey explains, "taking some time to do the job properly." Selecting the eggs for this year's entry will probably be Gordon and sons, Mark and Andrew.

The Yorgey's used to show their eggs at local shows but have since given that up, leaving the local shows for other producers to compete in. "While our children were young we would go to the local fairs to show for their enjoyment," recalls Mrs. Yorgey.

The eggs shown by the Yorgeys are all brown eggs, a preference of the family. The birds producing



It takes a lot of time to pack up the 90 to 100 cases of brown eggs that Red Wing Farm, Fleetwood, Berks County, ships out on a daily basis. Owner-operator Gordon Yorgey puts the

finishing touch on this last case of high quality eggs destined for markets in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Delaware.

the brown eggs are much calmer, easier to handle and have better temperments, explains Gordon. "They don't scare as easy as white birds," he says. Yorgey also points out that the egg shell quality of brown eggs holds up better than in white eggs.

This producer noted that production performance between the darker birds and white birds varies very little today, stating that he believes management is a more important factor today.

The birds laying at Red Wing Farm are all Dekalb Warren Sexual links. The Yorgeys used to raise their own layers and were hatching eggs until about 1963 before turning entirely into a laying operation.

Today Red Wing Farm is operated by Gordon and sons Mark and Joel. They also have other producers contracted to produce eggs for them. The operation ships eggs to five states with the help of two truck drivers who deliver to markets in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware. Red Wing Farms also are picked up by a driver from Virginia. The farm has ten full time employees, and is the largest brown egg producer in eastern Pennsylvania.

Eggs are retailed and sold wholesale. They go to other producers, restaurants, farmers' markets and stores. "Our market has basically filled in where small producers have left off," Yorgey

notes, usually from dairymen that had small laying houses as a secondary income, selling their eggs to small local corner stores.

Their best times for selling eggs are during the holidays, except for Easter. Consumers prefer white eggs at that time for dyeing purposes. Production runs between 90 to 100 cases per day.

At present, the Yorgey's operate two laying houses of their own, the newest with a capacity of 27,000 birds. This house is fully automatic, bringing eggs from the house through the grader. In the older, smaller building the eggs are gathered by hand onto racks which are then taken to the grader.

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Lending a hand with the 45,000 bird operation is son Andrew, 14, left. Yorgey is also assisted by two other sons, Joel and Mark.

million entries for the sire by Sonny later

and Virginia and even grade horse sales

dorff: "We receive calls all year long. They see in the Pa. Draft Horse at Farm Show and they stop in.

azing how horse prices up in spite of the horses that were selling even years ago are now around \$7,000 a piece. The r quality breeding stock d if you can't sell them e, just take them west to ra and they snatch them

L.B. buys and sells livestock for other (Turn to Page A30)

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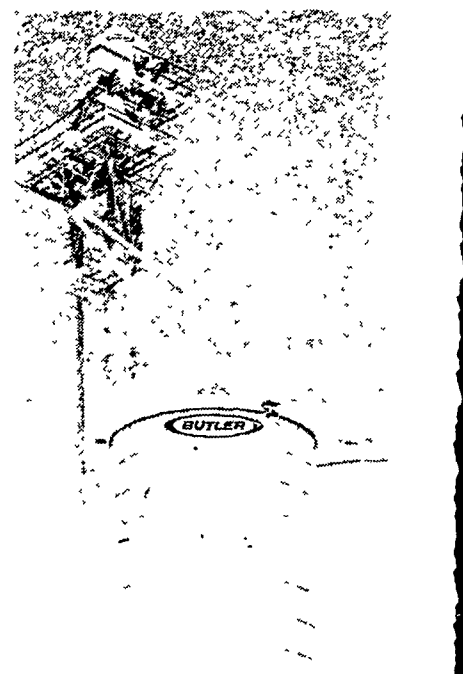
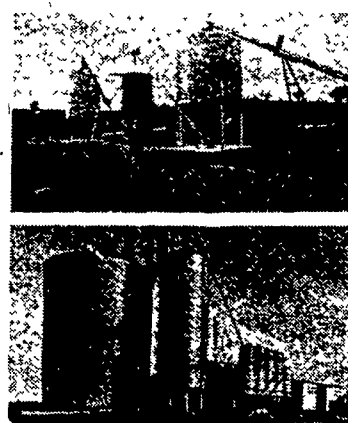
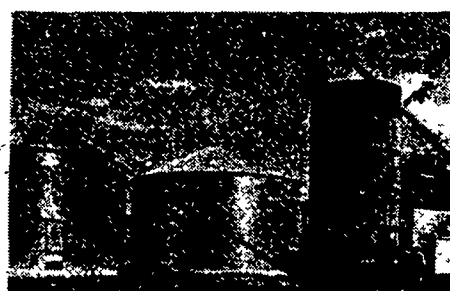
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