

Berks Co. dairy family recalls Farm Show memories, mix-ups

BY DONNA TOMMELEO
BERNVILLE — For some Pennsylvanians, the 1982 Farm Show will be a new experience, but for the children of John and Rita Stump, the agricultural extravaganza is just another notch in their belt.

No strangers to the awesome Farm Show Complex, the Stump clan and appointed Holsteins have made the hour-long drive for the past six years.

The oldest, Debbie (now married to Mark Johns) was the first to take halter in hand and parade her registered Holstein around the ring. Not unlike dominos, the rest of the family fell in line with the farm show tradition. Behind Debbie came Donna, 18, Doyle, 15, Doris, 13 and Denise, 12. Little brother Duane, 9, will make the trip, but as a spectator this time.

This year, Stumpland Farm will be represented by six registered Holsteins — all cows except for a red 2-year-old. The show string is comprised of three Glendell

daughters, one Arlinda Chief, and two by a homebred bull, one of which was sold to an A.I. stud in Germany.

Although several of the animals placed first in 1981 shows at Kutztown, Reading, Allentown and Harrisburg, the Stumps will be looking for their first blue ribbon at Farm Show.

What they probably won't be looking for is the "good old worn-out feeling" they experience following the big event.

"You're up at 4:30 in the morning and asleep by midnight. By the end of the week you're good and tired," noted Debbie, who has spent many a short night nestled beneath a bovine's brisket.

For the Stump children, the Farm Show will offer more than just show day jitters and excitement. The two youngest girls, Doris and Denise explained they are captivated by the small bird display and especially enjoy watching ducklings use the "duck slide". And although the children



The Stumpland line-up for the 1982 Farm Show includes from left to right Debbie, Doris, Denise, Doyle and Donna with their entries Creamie, Candie, Brandi, Susan, and Ursie. The sixth entry is currently housed at another farm.



Although this turkey may have eluded the Thanksgiving table, he couldn't slip past the grasp of the youngest member of Stumpland—9-year-old Diane.



Debbie Stump Johns, family's A.I. technician, looks over many of the animals he's bred. All of the Stumpland animals are

named according to the year of their birth. "We don't have any problem remembering who they're out of," Debbie remarks.

have spent all their lives on a farm, where births are common occurrences, they admitted the chick-hatching display never fails to fascinate them.

Although the 14-acre Farm Show Complex is "complex" enough to confuse even the Merrill Lynch bull, Duane Stump has earned the distinction of "family bloodhound." According to his siblings, the youngest member of the Stump clan can find his way around the agricultural maze like a seasoned veteran.

However, the family admitted that although 9-year-old Duane is adept at being in the right spot at the right time, the youngster also has the magical ability to disappear during chores.

If Duane could have used his magical powers to make a certain Holstein disappear some years ago, he might have saved sister Debbie from embarrassment. Debbie recalled the year when her 4-year-old Holstein, "Rhoda," refused to be led back to her stall and would conveniently make herself at home in the first stall she saw, even if it already was occupied. For the duration of the that Farm Show, Debbie found herself apologizing to other exhibitors everytime the stubborn Black and White went "visiting."

Farm Show spectators pitched in one year to make a little more work for the Stump girls during the Holstein show. Debbie explained

she was at the halter of an excitable animal when paper airplanes descended from the crowd perched above the large arena. Needless to say, Debbie found herself empty-handed as her entry loped around the ring.

Most of their half-dozen years of showing has been at 4-H events. The Stumps, all members of the Western Berks 4-H Dairy Club have relied on the help they've received from their club leader — their father John. As a youngster John never showed cattle and remarked that his years as a 4-H leader provided him with an education, as well as helped his family.

Although the Stumps will enter six animals this year, as many as 15 Stumpland Holsteins have been exhibited in the past. Preparing for shows may seem second nature to the Berks County family but as mother Rita pointed out, a few important items usually get overlooked.

"It seems that someone always forgets the manure fork and the feed scoop," she laughed.

When the family is not disappearing, chasing cows or forgetting equipment they're usually hard at work at their 140-acre dairy.

Mornings begin around 5:30 when Donna, Doris and Denise begin milking the 55 Black and Whites, which push an average of 16,400 pounds of milk and 586 pounds of fat through the around-the-barn pipeline.

Doyle and brother-in-law Mark take care the bovines' breakfast of

mixed haylage served via an electric silage cart.

Later in the day, the herd receives corn silage top dressed with high moisture corn and a 32 percent protein mix which is mostly soybean meal. A mixture of alfalfa and orchardgrass hay tops off the evening meal.

Debbie chooses bulls for the Stumpland breeding program and is the family's A.I. technician. A peek into the Stump's semen tank reveals some of the top breed sires such as Glendell, Pabst, Creek, Astronaut, Pete and Milestone.

While most U.S. farmers are aware of the current milk surplus, John Stump explained that his method of feeding whole milk to his calves helps curb his dairy's surplus.

"I only buy a couple bags of milk replacer a year," said Stump, who also raises all his bull calves until service age.

Calves are started on equal amounts of high protein pellets, crimped corn and oats.

John and Rita Stump moved to Bernville from their original York County farm in 1963. They brought 50 head of dairy animals and two children. Today, four children later, the Stumps have watched their operation spill across three different farms. They've seen Stumpland animals marketed in Europe and they've gathered memories with each passing year.

The theme of this year's Farm Show is, "PA Agriculture — We're Growing Better," something the John Stumps have been doing for 19 years.

You've come a long way, baby

HARRISBURG — Rules were made to be broken so this year Farm Show says good-bye to a 30-year rule which appears on page 51 in the premium book.

According to the dairy caretaker rule in the youth classes, "each club, school or county unit must provide one caretaker for each ten or less animals and make provision for his expenses. Girls or women must not be sent as caretakers."

Farm Show commissioners and even Secretary Hollowell were

surprised the outdated rule, which appears only in the dairy section, still remained in the book.

"You can be sure it won't be there next year," Hollowell declared.

Lancaster Farming tried to contact a few young women on dairy farms to get their reaction to the rule, but they could not be reached.

It seems they all were in the barn, "taking care" of business.