

Milk Way Farm grows

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also called the wee hours of the morning.)

The 4-hour milking ritual is repeated 12 hours later, at 1 p.m. The Hornbakers have hired two additional men to carry out the morning and evening milkings, freeing their time for field work and recordkeeping.

"Our milking schedule seems odd," commented Paul, "but it works for us and the milkers."

Milk Way Farms ships out approximately 15,000 pounds of milk every other day, storing it in a 25,000-pound tank. Because of the expense required to keep this size tank cool, the Hornbakers use a recycling system for cooling and heating water.

The recycling system is operated by a device called a Thermaster. This produces the gas needed to cool the tank; the gas is then recycled to heat the water which is used to clean the dairy equipment

and milking parlor. Paul boasted the money-saving qualities of this "recycler."

With the large numbers of cows and acres that make up Milk Way Farms, how do the Hornbakers keep everything running smoothly and orderly?

One method is to use all the available management tools, such as the Animal Analysis Association's breeding program which son Gary has implemented in the herd this past year. Both Gary and Paul admitted that with several hundred cows, some type of aid in the reproductive process became an absolute necessity.

Gary explained that he selected Animal Analysis Association's system because it enabled him to use studs from any artificial insemination unit. Using the principle of classification, a cow's good and bad points were noted and then a complimentary bull was selected. The Hornbakers are

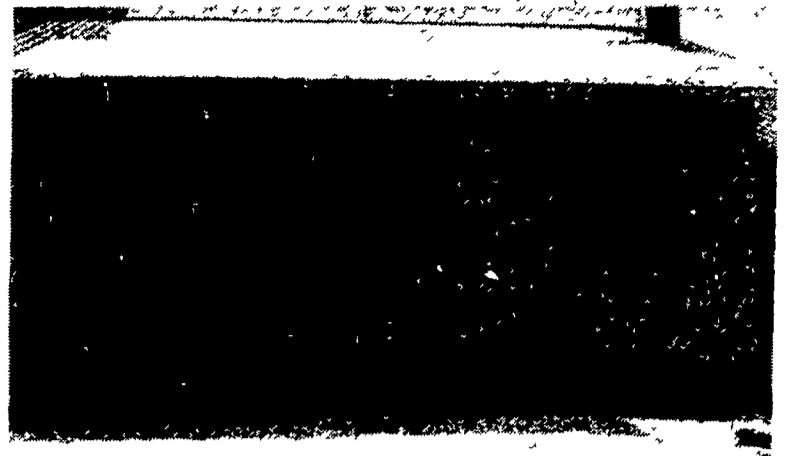
anxiously awaiting the outcome of this process — with the proof-of-the-pudding coming this fall as 70 heifers freshen.

As passersby cast a casual glance over the Milk Way herd, heads will undoubtedly turn a second time in an eyesight check. What will trigger this double-take response? Orange tail heads and rumps on a third of the black and white cows.

The orange color is actually a chalk used to identify those cows that are open and those that are in heat. When a cow rides another, the orange chalk is rubbed off.

"This is just an aid," said Paul. "It is not 100 percent fool proof, but it does help us catch many cows that might otherwise be missed in a herd of this size."

The Milk Way herd presently consists of 60 percent registered Holsteins and 40 percent grades. However, the Hornbakers are working towards an all registered herd — their investment in the future.



Passersby are made well aware of the pride the Hornbakers take in their dairy operation and the industry they represent.

"It is a slow process," Paul confessed. However, he acknowledged that registered cattle "will always have a higher

resale value, along with their offspring. Building a registered herd is a definite plus for any dairyman," he said.

This fall the Hornbakers' 40 calf hutches will be full to overflowing with registered calves — future replacement heifers and marketable animals.

Like their young calves which Hornbaker described as "healthy and growing like weeds," the Cumberland County dairy farmer expresses a healthy outlook for farming.

"I feel we have to look at the future optimistically," remarked Paul. "For any farmer to survive in this economy, he is going to have to have good management skills. And, with these skills, there will be opportunities for the farmer to move ahead."

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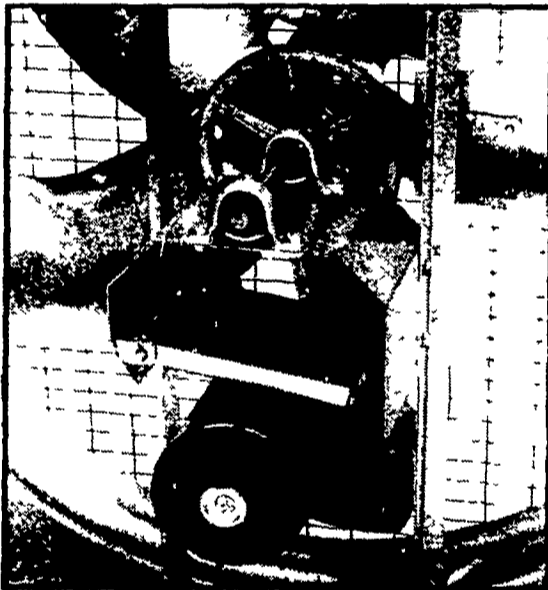
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