

Smiling Holsteins

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"We don't plan on any major changes and we can't justify adding cows on," he explained.

Although most of their time is spent with the herd, Clifford helps his uncle during harvest. Jacob Kreider farms the land and provides all the feed for the Blank Holsteins.

When Clifford does assist his uncle with harvesting, he keeps a record of his hours and is reimbursed at the end of the month. Likewise, the Blanks calculate the number of hay bales and cartfulls of silage used so they can settle up with Kreider on a monthly basis.

Joyce still works at the food market but has her days cut back to just one a week. The rest of her time is spent milking the cows, tending calves and maintaining the couple's garden.

"My days surprisingly filled up fast," Joyce laughed.

The Blanks suffered a minor setback, however, when their new calf crop struggled with scours last summer. Puzzled by the condition, Clifford explained that the calves were individually housed in outdoor hutches, spaced far apart. In addition, Joyce wrote each calf's name on its bucket to further reduce transmission. In spite of their efforts, the babies continued to scour.

Although they never lost a heifer calf during that time, the Blanks said they realized the big responsibility of running a herd on their own.

"It's not always fun to take care of sick animals," said Cliff.

Eventually, the bout with scours subsided and for their efforts, it seemed, the Blanks were rewarded with two sets of twins in one day—a pair of heifers and a heifer and bull.

With less than a year of farming on their own behind them, the Blanks are awaiting their first rolling herd average.

However, Joyce and Cliff are no strangers to the show ring. Next week, they plan on competing in the annual Lancaster County Holstein Show at the Solanco fairgrounds.

"Showing is a challenge. I like to see how good I can make the animals look," Joyce said. Her years in 4-H have provided her with a sound foundation in halter-breaking and showing. Clifford became interested in shows about three years ago when the Blanks got engaged and now clips all the show animals.

Together, the couple hopes to come up with a winning combination next week. But win or lose, it's a sure bet they'll come up "smiling."

Soybean producers elect Board members


NEWARK, Del. — Soybean producers in Kent and Sussex counties selected three representatives for the Delaware Soybean Board.

Secretary of Agriculture Donald J. Lynch announced that Keith Carlisle of Greenwood, Joseph

Hughes of Felton and Homer W. Torbert of Frederica were elected to three-year terms on the Board. Lynch noted balloting continues to show increasing producers' interest, with nearly 250 farmers voting.

The Delaware Soybean Board

administers the self-help programs funded by the soybean check-off. This year the Board is funding eighteen projects. These projects range from local and international marketing efforts to developing controls for local weed problems.



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