

Poust parts with "cream" of Mun-Cre crop

By Joyce Bupp
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MUNCY — Come Tuesday morning, Lester Poust will part with a large chunk of his life's work.

Poust, of R4 Muncy, Lycoming County, is a registered Holstein breeder, one of those individuals his peers might label a "breeder's breeder." Based on three foundation brood cows he purchased some years ago, Poust has bred his Mun-Cre Holsteins into pedigree perfection spreading the herd's genetic influence around the world.

But overcrowded facilities, along with that plague of so many dairyfarmers — aching knees — have combined to nudge Poust to skim the best from his herd of deep-pedigreed high milk and fat producers and offer them to buyers at his Sept. 21 "Cream of Mun-Cre" sale.

"We wanted to have a quality sale when we decided to do it," Poust reflects, looking back to the months of weighing pros and cons of selling. That long-pondered decision becomes final Tuesday, when a large portion of the milkers and young stock from the BAA 107.6 herd, which includes 14 Excellents, 25 Very Goods, and 14

Good Plus animals, of the 105 offered, only one lone animal is not home bred.

Like so many success stories, Poust's has seen tragic moments. He lost his father as a youngster, but the family continued dairying with a herd of about a dozen Milking Shorthorns.

Along came the Pennsylvania Brucellosis testing program and the family lost all but two of the herd.

"It was common for people to lose animals at that time, he says of the now-routine testing program. "It was hard at the time, but the best thing that could have happened."

Later, Poust would return to the dairy business, milking a mix of grade black and whites, and Guernseys.

It was his acquisition of Maggie at a sale at Columbia Countian Chris Wolff's Pen-Col farm that marked the turning point in Mun-Cre herd history.

Pen-Col Ivanhoe Maggie, a daughter of the now-legendary Osborndale Ivanhoe, went to Poust for a final bid of \$800.

One cattle dealer, learning that Poust had bid what then considered a rather steep figure, reckoned the young dairyman



Mun-Cre Farm, named for the Muncy Creek outstanding Holstein herds. A partial dispersal that meanders through the scenic Lycoming County valley, is home for one of the country's

could have brought two good cows for that price.

Poust turned around and bid again, paying \$300 for a calf, Maggie's Woodbourne Inka Reflector daughter, Pen-Col Reflector Misty.

The Mun-Cre "M" family was off and running. Maggie would eventually score VG-87, and make lifetime records of more than 175,000 pounds milk, with a 4.0 percent test.

Mun-Cre Betty Medley, a great-granddaughter of Maggie, is a tribute to Poust's breeding philosophy over the years, and a favorite young four year old he figures may be the first across the sale ring.

Scored EX at four, the young Milu Betty Ivanhoe Chief daughter carries the Ivanhoe, Chief and ABC Reflection Sovereign bloodlines and Poust has combined in his pedigree program, and packs an ancestry whallop seldom seen. Her dam by Elevation is 2E-93, grandam by Standout 3E-92,

and great-granddam, an own daughter of Maggie by Citation Chambric Marshall, is also 3E-92.

Maggie's Misty calf matured into a fine cow in her own right, scored VG-88, and mothered another branch of the "M's". Her Citation R daughter went Excellent with lifetime credits over 123,000 pounds gave Poust two more Excellent daughters.

"The old Ivanhoe's were the best brood cows we've ever had," insists Poust. He credits the tall dairyness to the Ivanhoe influence, adding the stretch was exactly what the breed needed at the time to counter the smaller genetic traits of then-predominant Burke bloodlines.

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Lasso: "Grand dame" of the Mun-Cre herd until her untimely death earlier this year, Mun-Cre Elevation Lasso, 2E-95, had a five-year-old record over 30,000 milk and 1200 fat. Her sons are in use in both Japan and France.



Medley: Mun-Cre Betty Medley epitomizes Poust's philosophy of crossing great proven breed bloodlines like Ivanhoe, Chief, ABC Reflection Sovereign and the more recent Elevation influence. Scored EX at four-years-old, Medley's from an Elevation dam that was 2E-93, and the next two dams were both 3E-92.



Merchandising at Mun-Cre is a vital part of the purebred business. Poust houses his ET's in part of his machine shed, where each is separately tied, can receive individual attention and be easily viewed by the several hundred visitors that annually stop by the Muncy herd. Lester and Diane check on a Glendell heifer in the lineup of outstanding, growthy ET's.



Placing heavy emphasis on strong maternal lines coupled with the very best sires has produced animals like "Medley" an EX four-year-old, and a favorite of Lester's that he'll likely choose to open his sale.