

Lanc. Holstein Club takes tour

LANCASTER — The Lancaster County Holstein Club visited outstanding purebred herds in Columbia County as part of the Club's annual tour, Thursday. Eighty-three persons participated in the bus tour. Five farms were included in the tour this year, each with a unique attraction.

First stop was Mun-Cre Farms, owned by Lester Poust. The club examined Lester's herd that has a BAA over 107 with 12 excellent cows. Lester's favorite cow, Mun-Cre Elevation Misty, is the foundation cow of the herd with 92 points and 36,604 milk, 4.2 percent and 1532 fat.

Paul and Wayne Ritter, of Ritter Ridge are in partnership with their mother, Hilda. The Ritter brothers took the tour through their new 96 tie stall barn. The barn's design is unusual, with a 15-foot peak ceiling, that provides improved ventilation especially during hot summer months.

Touring farmers were fascinated with a two-month-old calf that had been born prematurely in January. Because

the calf weighed only 25 pounds at birth, Mrs. Ritter brought it into her home and has nurtured the calf to a present weight of 85 pounds. She bottle nursed the calf every two hours to start, keeping the calf in a child's playpen. Mrs. Ritter now grinds up Calf Manna in her blender and mixes it in the calf's milk. She said the calf lays next to the family dog and is paper trained.

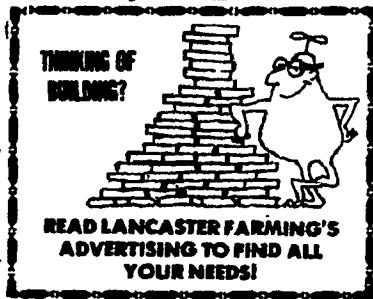
Next stop on the tour was Fran-Jan Holsteins, owned by Frank Jurbala. The Jurbalas farm on only ten acres, buying all their feed from local farmers at harvest time. Jurbala feeds high moisture shelled corn three times a day, baled hay five times a day, and top dresses the ration with bean meal and mineral mix. The herd average is more than 21,000.

The group was then hosted by Dennis Wolff. See Wolff feature story for more details of his operation. The Wolff's own Pen-Col Farm, a progressive farm that is actively involved in embryo transfer and international marketing of cattle and embryos.

Wolff presently has 130 heifers pregnant by ET. The Wolff's retail 90 percent of their milk through a store on the farm and another in Bloomsburg.

The last farm stop was the Dick Yule farm. Yule is also working with ET and exporting embryos. The group saw Yule's favorite cow, a young Pete daughter out of an Astronaut dam. She is a three-quarters sister to the Ace bull, and milked 89 pounds per day as a two year old.

A ham and turkey dinner put on by the Greenwood United Methodist Church, completed the tour, leaving the group very satisfied with day's events.



Save fuel costs in tillage

UNIVERSITY PARK

Because Pennsylvania farmers use almost half of their tractor fuel for tillage, alternative methods of tillage can have a noticeable effect on farm fuel usage, as well as save time, labor, and machine wear. According to Jim Garthe, Penn State Extension agricultural engineer.

Three basic ways to cut waste in tillage operations are combining tillage operations, eliminating some operations, and no-till.

Any of those methods also will help reduce soil compaction because of fewer trips across the field.

In order to combine tillage operations, you can pull a piece of secondary tillage equipment behind your plow. That is, if your tractor is big enough. Chisel plows require about 30 percent less power than moldboard plows, so chances are that you might have a chisel plow that doesn't load your tractor near its capacity.

Other possible combinations to consider when doubling up on implements are: disk and apply herbicide or fertilizer; plow and plant, or plow and inject

ammonia; plant and apply fertilizer or herbicide.

Adding a piece of secondary tillage equipment saves fuel two ways — the tractor runs more efficiently because it's operating closer to its rated capacity, and one or more trips through the field are eliminated.

Always be careful however, not to overload your tractor. This can cause costly breakdowns and shorter engine life.

Eliminating some tillage operations and the number of trips across the field can also save on your tillage fuel bill.

Depending on the condition of your soil and what kind of stubble is in the field, moldboard plowing is not always necessary. Garthe says that sometimes it is possible to save energy by not plowing as deeply or possibly not plowing at all.

Also, one application of herbicide can do the work of two or three cultivations.

No-till is becoming more popular in Pennsylvania, now accounting for nearly 50 percent of corn, 15 percent of forages, and 10 percent of small grain crops grown in the state.

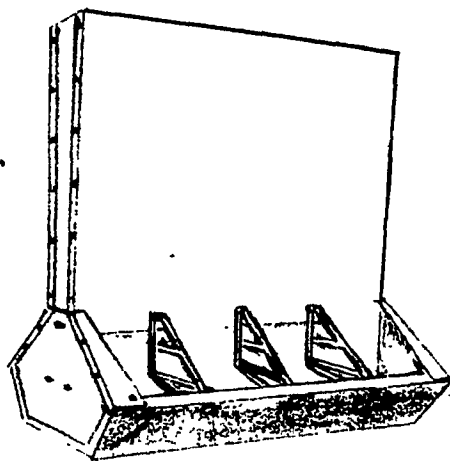
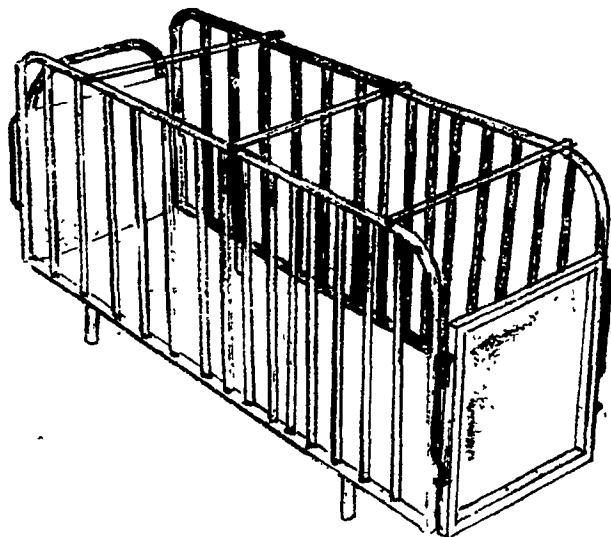
Not only can no-till save up to 80 percent of tillage fuel costs, it cuts soil and water loss because weeds, stubble, and vegetation are left on the surface of the soil, protecting it from being blown or washed away and less water is lost to evaporation.

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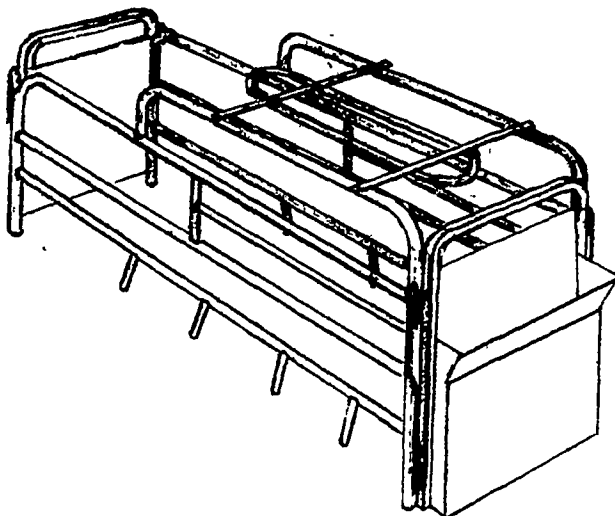
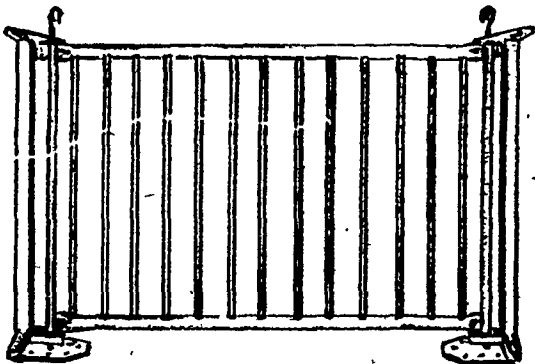
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