

Despite stray voltage problem

Half century in dairy & still going strong

BY HAROLD SHELLY
PEN ARGYL — Fred Achenbach started farming at age 17 with two mules and three cows. He also brought a new bride to his rented farm adjacent to the home

farm in the rolling hills of Northampton County near Pen Argyl. That was fifty years ago, and Achenbach who's almost 68, says that he still enjoys farming, and all the ups and downs that go with it.

Until 1978, he had a registered dairy herd that was among the top DHIA herds in the county. A serious mastitis problem developed, and the herd was dispersed. It wasn't until long after

the herd had gone, that stray voltage was found to be the culprit. The source of the voltage turned out to be half mile from the farm.

Achenbach is now in the business of selling replacement heifers. He says he enjoys it because he gets up at 6:30 A.M. instead of 4:30, manages to get a day off once in a while, "and besides, I'm having fun."

The business has no slow period, and keeps him busy year 'round. He tries to have the animals bred so they freshen in the fall, when demand is greatest.

The present herd consists of 260 animals, but the number can vary from day to day as replacements are sold, and new, younger calves are added to the herd.

Achenbach buys open heifers at

dispersal sales, usually from one-year-old to breeding age. They are bred to a registered bull that runs with the herd, and sold mainly to local dairymen, just before they freshen.

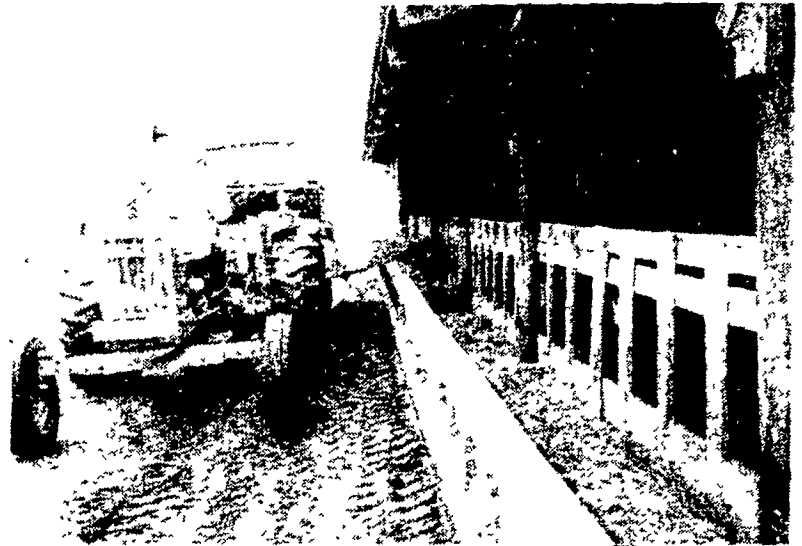
The philosophy at Henroy Farms is to buy only top animals, breed them at 850 pounds, and sell them a month to six weeks before they freshen, when they weigh 1300 pounds. Fred says with a top animal, he charges a premium price. "I must be doing something right, I keep getting repeat business."

The herd stays in the barn year round, and is fed corn silage in the winter. They are presently feeding ryelage and haylage. All the feed is home-grown on 450 acres. The home farm is 200 acres, and the

(Turn to Page A22)



Fred Achenbach, half-century veteran in dairying, pauses briefly in tractor cab.



Jeff Achenbach feeds heifers.

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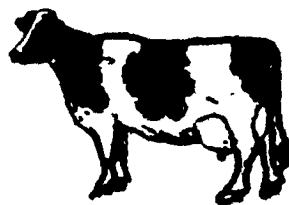
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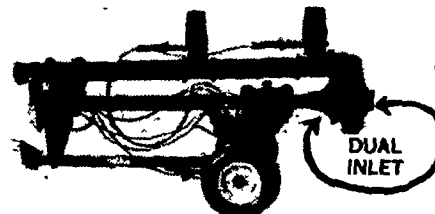
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