

Amazing Acres - How business sense is applied

With desire, any dream is possible

BY ROBIN PHILLIPS
Staff Correspondent

WOMELSDORF — With a dream in the back of their minds and a desire for a quieter lifestyle, two ambitious couples pooled their talents and resources to purchase a farm and begin their own business. The requirements for their venture included the ability to stay on their farm, to work with animals, to provide a service to the area, and to be self sufficient.

Thus, "Amazing Acres Custom Wool Processing" was formed in Berks County.

Owned by Pat and Donna Kennedy and Donna's sister Debbie Mikulak and her husband, Fred Bloom, "Amazing Acres" just opened its doors in April and its becoming busier day by day as its services are becoming known.

"We don't have time to do a lot of the other things we planned", its owners say. But the pride in their

business, which has achieved such popularity in so short a time, is evident in their faces.

"Since the wool pool pays such pitiful prices for the shepherd's wool, we wanted to offer alternative marketing for them", Donna states.

The main purpose behind "Amazing Acres" is to provide a quality service to the small and large wool producer, handspinner, and weaver. They boast a below average fee for processing and have no minimum poundage requirements.

"Most of our business is from people who spin their own yarns", Donna states, and adds that they guarantee to return the customer their own wool. (Most other mills require at least 100-200 pounds of wool before they guarantee to return your own wool). Capable of scouring, picking, and carding a fleece, and able to make rovings or batts, "Amazing Acres" uses no chemicals and treats the wool as gently as possible.

How did four "non-farm" people know what it takes to purchase a farm and begin what must have seemed like a very complicated agricultural profession?

"We always talked about a business together", Donna stated. "It sort of came about 40 years earlier", Debbie added. A former Spanish teacher at Reading Area Community College, Reading, Donna Kennedy explained.

About two and one-half years ago, Pat, Donna's husband, who was a purchasing agent for a major company, was offered a job

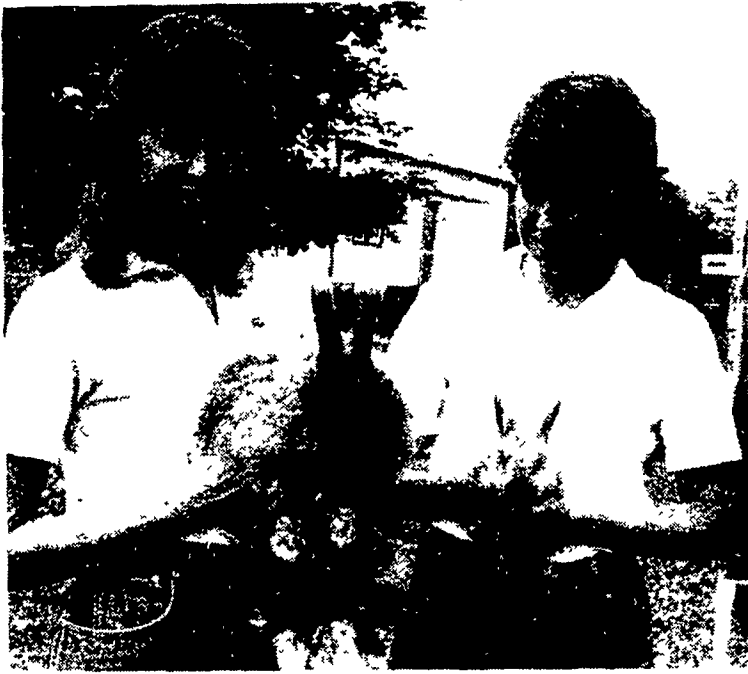
in Mexico. After selling their home and preparing to move, the Kennedy's found out that the job offer fell through. It was at this time that Debbie, who was a personnel director for a cosmetics company, and her husband, Fred, who is the Business Manager at Temple University, came to visit from their home in Philadelphia.

"We knew about a neat farm for sale when Debbie and Fred were visiting," Donna explains, and

they took them to see it right away. The joint idea was turned into reality with the purchase of the small farm in Northwestern Berks County and the two families began to research various ideas for their own business.

Their first venture was a breed and herb shop which also sold their homemade pastries and handmade crafts. It was discovered that their farm was too far out of town to attract a steady clientele and "we

Angora rabbits



Donna and Debbie take great pride in their Angora rabbits.

Receiving



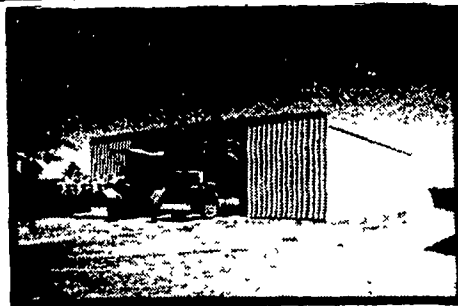
Pat Kennedy receives fleeces, which are awaiting processing.



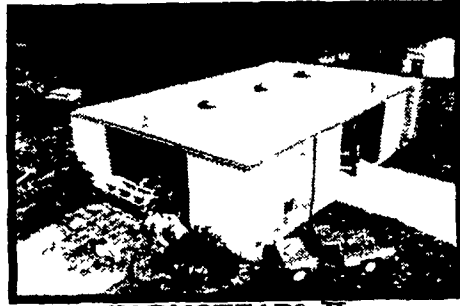
Fred Bloom removes mos

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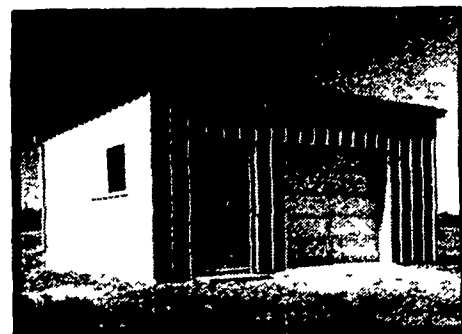
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