

Howcrest Holsteins

Building on a strong foundation

BY TRISH WILLIAMS

WILLOW STREET — South of Lancaster, just beyond the city's suburban fringe, in the rolling hills of rural Lancaster County, lies the Willow Street home of the John Howard family and their Howcrest Holsteins. John and Susan Howard started their herd of registered Holsteins three years ago, and are already milking a fine quality herd of 45 head.

The Howards started their milking herd in May 1981 with only 23 cows. By that fall freshening heifers and the procurement of additional animals had the number in the milking string up to 36. In only two years the number of cows on test has grown to the present 44. The rolling herd average has also increased from an impressive first year's average of 18,000 pounds of milk and 701 pounds of fat, to an outstanding second year average of 21,062 pounds of 3.6 percent milk and 765 pounds of milkfat.

On June 22, in recognition of the tremendous progress they have made, the Howards were selected as Inter-State Milk Producers' Cooperative's 1983 Outstanding Young Cooperators.

John and Susan received the honor at the Penmarva Young Cooperators conference held in Washington, D.C. A plaque was

presented to the Young Cooperators in a ceremony commemorating their achievement in the Grand Ballroom of the Mayflower Hotel.

It is no mistake the Howards were selected as the outstanding dairy couple. Both John and Susan grew up on well managed dairy farms, and have broad dairying experience.

John's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Howard, Jr. have a herd of registered Holsteins in Wyalusing, Bradford County. In 1975 John graduated from Penn State with a B.S. in animal industry. For several years Howard worked for the Pennsylvania Holstein Association doing promotion.

While working for PHA, Howard purchased 11 bred heifers. During a purchase agreement with J. Mowery Frey, Howard met Frey's daughter Susan. They later married, and in May of 1981 Howard resigned from PHA to start his milking herd.

The couple moved their cattle to the farm of Susan's grandfather, J. Mowery Frey, Sr. John and Susan rent the stanchion barn and 70-acre farm complete with a farm pond. Fifty-eight acres are tillable and are custom farmed. Howard concentrates on the herd



Foundation cow, Grams-Joy Arlinda Meg, now rated Excellent at 90, was one of the first 11 bred heifers Howard bought while working at PHA.

management and is beginning to merchandise his calves.

The herd receives a homegrown ration of corn silage and dry alfalfa hay. A commercial concentrate is fed based on production.

Foundation animals in the herd include seven Jet Stream daughters, six Elevation daughters, and a few Marvex daughters. Howard is now using the Glendell and SWD Valiant bulls in his breeding program.

The herd came out of their May classifications with flying colors. Three cows were rated excellent, 15 very good, and the remaining 25 all rated good plus. The herd's BAA is 105.1

John and Susan have two children, Lisa, three, and Matthew, two. Susan says the farming operation is a good size to support the family and still allow her plenty of time to spend with her children now during their formative years.

Susan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Mowery Frey, live nearby. The Freys will host the Lancaster County Holstein Club field day on Thursday, July 28, on their Willow Street farm. Frey is a recognized Holstein breeder in his own right, and helped Susan start purchasing her own cattle.

Lisa and Matthew are coming on now, and have a great start in this growing family operation.



Howard feeds his herd alfalfa hay three to four times each day to keep butterfat levels high.



In less than two years, John and Susan Howard have built their herd to 45 head with a RHA of 21,062 milk and 765 fat.

A growing family operation



Two-year-old Matthew, and Lisa, three, like this little Glendell heifer, receive a farm fresh dairy ration high in TLC.



Since she was child, one of her favorite places on her grandfather's farm is the pond. Now Susan enjoys spending them at the pond with her children, Matthew and Lisa.