

## In college to get more involved in dairying

WILLIAMSPORT — Barbara J. Bair, of R2 Mill Hall, doesn't have to worry about what to do with her spare time — it's not something she has a lot of these days! The 26-year-old Centre County woman works with her husband, Ronald E. Bair, on their dairy farm and looks after their three sons, and is a full-time student at The Williamsport Area Community College where she is enrolled in Dairy Herd Management.

Mrs. Bair, who was married in August 1974, relates that she was not raised on a farm and did not immediately become involved with her husband in working on the family farm. For three years after her marriage, she was employed as a spinner at Armstrong Cork Company at Beech Creek.

Keeping the farm books was the extent of her involvement with the farm until October, 1978 when she and her husband made arrangements to begin leasing his parent's farm. Dale E. and Mary A. Bair continue to live in the family farmhouse and to provide assistance with the farm work, however, the younger Bairs have full responsibility for the farm, both financial and operation. They are milking 40 Holstein cows and raise corn and alfalfa on the 60-acre farm. The Bairs also lease a large amount of land which they use to raise crops for their operation.

Barbara, who assists with the feeding and milking chores, says she has not become deeply involved in the field work since Ronald has not had the time to properly instruct her in the operation of field equipment. He holds full-time position with Dunkle and Grieb, a John Deere Equipment store at Mill Hall. One of the reasons the Centre County woman decided to enroll in the Dairy Herd Management program at The Williamsport Area Community College was to learn more about the field work phase of the operation. She also wants to learn more about dairy nutrition, herd health, and breeding. All of these facets of the dairy industry are included in the College's one-year certificate program.

Barbara points out that both her mother and mother-in-law have made it easier for her to attend College by watching the Bair's sons, aged eight, five and three.

Barbara is kept busy attending College approximately 30 hours a week. Evenings she assists with the feeding and milking of cows, does the household chores, and then at 9 p.m. after the boys are to bed, studies. For the year she is in College, Barbara is not participating in the morning milking and feeding chores. Instead she gets up at 5 a.m. and studies.

The younger Bairs intend to eventually purchase the farm from his parents and are currently buying their own equipment, cattle, feed, and paying all the bills. Barbara said she expects the Dairy Herd Management course to teach her how to make more money as well as how to make it an easier manner.

Barbara is one of 15 students enrolled full-time in Dairy Herd Management, a new course at the College this year. One student is enrolled part-time. Instructor Robert A. Patton, R2 Howard,

points out that all of the students have some type of farm background and many of them have worked on the farm. He also noted that none of the students have come directly to the program from the high school classroom. Most of his students have worked on farms or at ag-related jobs since graduating from high school, Patton said, and upon recognizing the need for more education, enrolled in the course at the community college.

Patton, who owns a farm in Centre County, now devotes most of his time to teaching. He brings considerable expertise to the Program, since he has a bachelors degree in Dairy Production and a masters degree in Dairy Nutrition. Besides having worked his own farm for many years, Patton has also taught Animal Science at Penn State.

He calls his teaching situation at The Williamsport Area Com-

munity College "ideal" and says he finds the students enthusiastic and hard-working. Patton particularly likes the size of the class since it gives him more time to provide individualized instruction.

The Dairy Herd Management program consists of 50 percent lecture and 50 percent hands-on learning instruction at The Danville Farm in Montour County. The College leases the State farm through an agreement with the Commonwealth and the arrangement has proven to be very beneficial to the College's Agribusiness and Dairy Herd Management students. The Danville Farm, one of the top producing farms in the State, provides students with the opportunity to learn all phases of the dairy farm operation. Classroom learning at the College's Earth Science Campus, near Allenwood, is reinforced with hands-on

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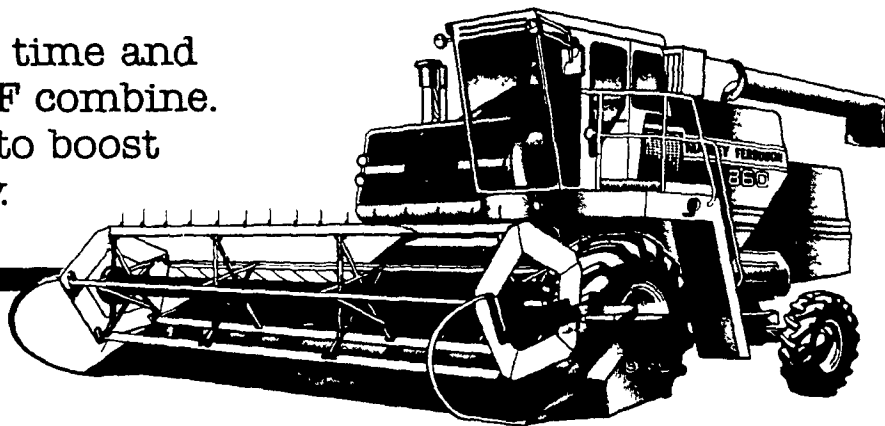
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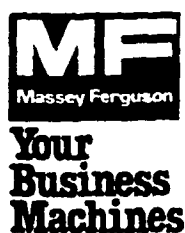
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