

Mt. Joy shepherd

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of your lambs if you're not watching."

Longenecker likes to see his lambs weigh between 10 to 12 pounds at birth and reach about a 110-pound finishing weight. Because he raises different breeds, not all lambs reach that weight. Dorsets, he said, are ready for market at 80 to 90 pounds, Cheviots at about 70 pounds, and the Suffolks and Hampshires do reach between 100 to 110 pounds.

About 90 days are needed to reach finishing weight, Longenecker said. The lambs are on creep feeding and gain about one-half to one pound per day. Feed consists of hay, pasture grass and some grain.

The ewe flock is also pastured, and receives hay and grain. In feeding the ewes, Longenecker said he determines feed based on the ewe's own individual condition. If the condition is good, he said, some ewes don't need grain during the winter and are fed only hay.

"A quality hay with good protein is sufficient," Longenecker said. "I don't feel the need to supplement feed."

Many farmers overfeed their sheep, Longenecker said, and they get too fat. A lamb with a good meat type, leg type and long loin is what he looks for in his market animals.

Longenecker said he would like to continue improving the quality of his sheep and also look into other outlets for his market lambs. Direct marketing would be good, he said, but then he would need to raise more sheep.



These young market lambs enjoy a barnyard full of leaves, a bedding Bill Longenecker finds both economical and practical.

Other goals he has set are to continue his religious work. From 1969 to 1974, he was a pastor in Salunga, and from 1974 until this year, he served the Church of the Brethren in Mt. Wilson, Lebanon County.

Currently, he substitutes at area churches and conducts preaching missions. He has brought his farming into his work by sponsoring church functions at his farm.

He would also like to use his sheep in his work, and has taken some to church programs during the Christmas season and to Bible study sessions.

Some day, he said, he would also like to dramatize Psalm 23 through a slide presentation using pictures

of his sheep. Easter songs are another possibility, said this pastor who's found a shepherd in his religious work as well as being a shepherd in his own sorts.

Pennfield

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includes a good feeding program that provides cows with proper nutrition.

"Think of the cow as an athlete," said Shirk. "She needs good lungs, and must be free of respiratory disease. Digestive disease can inhibit efficient feed utilization."

A "positive program for breeding dairy cows" was the subject of a talk given by Brian Perkins, Pennfield manager of dairy and livestock nutrition.

Perkins stressed the importance of feeding the correct levels of protein and vitamins to assure reproductive efficiency. Adequate vitamin A is necessary for good reproductive function, he said. Vitamin A helps guard the integrity of the epithelial lining of the reproductive tract.

"Feed 'em to breed 'em," said Perkins. "Look at the cows, observe them throughout the lactation to make sure they look in good flesh."

For high producing cows or cows under stress, Pennfield introduced

a new line of High-Yield Dairy Feeds. High-Yield feeds are designed specially for cows with high nutritional requirements. It is a denser or more compact feed, with more nutrients per volume. This helps cows in early lactation whose feed intake may be limited by bulk and thus are not able to meet their nutritional requirements.

John Fidler, Pennfield manager of technical services, said, "Improvements in the genetics of dairy cows must be matched with improvements in nutrition if she is to reach her genetic potential for production."

High-Yield feeds help high producing cows to overcome the problem of dry matter limiting nutrient intake during the first quarter of lactation. Fidler recommended these feeds for herds with a rolling herd average greater than 17,000M.

The amino acid methionine, sodium bicarbonate buffers and B vitamins are what helps to give High-Yield feeds a nutritional boost.

Mahlandt said these dairy day sessions held in Lancaster were the first in a series of 10 such meetings scheduled throughout Pennfield's marketing area.



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