

# Climbing to the top of Schuylkill DHIA

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PITMAN — Hidden between several mountains in the western corner of Schuylkill County can be found the highest milking and testing herd in the county — the 64 registered Holsteins of Carl and Alice Snyder.

From an average of 19,942 pounds of milk, 3.6 percent test and 708 pounds butterfat in 1982 to 21,009 pounds milk 3.9 percent, and 821 pounds butterfat in 1983, the Carl A. Farms Holsteins have completed their climb into the top production spot in the county.

Snyder credits much of the success to feeding roughage on top of grain. Four to five times a day the cows are fed haylage, corn silage, high moisture shelled corn, and a 40 percent protein supplement with hay pulled apart on top of the grain. 1983 was the first year that Snyder used this method to feed his cows.

"You're not changing the buffer in their stomachs," he explained.

Another factor that Snyder says contributed to the milk and fat increases was keeping the cows cool during the summer. Many fans were installed in the stanchion barn and cows were kept inside.

"It would be as much as 10 to 12 degrees cooler in the barn," Alice Snyder explains.

Snyder also revealed an additional ingredient of his herd's success—total family involvement. In addition to a full working partnership, the Snyders have four sons who contribute new ideas into the operation. Donald, a Penn State graduate, was recently hired by Pennfield Corporation as a sales representative. Steve is in his third year majoring in animal science at Cornell University. Mark is majoring in computer science at Lock Haven University and Tracy is a senior at Tri Valley High School.

Snyder explained that it was his sons' idea for feed roughage with the grain. He admitted that when his sons were home over the summer, the cows got fed better.

"The kids fixed up the fans, too" he added.

"It's really something when Cornell and Penn State get together," Alice jokes about her sons and their ideas.

"Anytime they come up with a better idea that I can figure out, I go along with it," Snyder said. "You got to change," he added.

Saying that many older dairymen resist change, Snyder said the old ideas must be weighed



Carl, Alice and Mark Snyder with "India," one of the top members of the Carl A. Farms herd. India was a 4-H project of

against the new ones and a progressive dairyman must be able to admit when there is a better idea. Perhaps the reason that the Snyders have children eager to contribute to the farm is because the parents have always supported them. In addition to putting three daughters through college, three sons in college, and a fourth on the way, the Snyders have always made time for their children. Through 4-H, FFA, football, baseball, and wrestling, they always found time away from the farm to enjoy their children's interests.

"Let them enjoy their years in school, they have the rest of their lives to work," Mrs. Snyder stated.

The Snyders are not dictating their children's future either.

"We think they ought to try something else first, then come back to the farm if they want it," Snyder said.

"I never worked away from

home," he continued. "Maybe they'd like something better."

It was 23 years ago that Carl A. Farms began with the purchase of Mrs. Snyder's home farm. Prior to that, Carl and Alice managed the chicken operation on the farm of Carl's parents.

"I didn't like chickens," Alice stated. This preference, along with Carl's brothers forming a partnership on his parent's farm, prompted the purchase of their own dairy.

Carl and Alice manage their dairy and 220 acres of hay and corn with no outside help. Alice takes care of all the feeding, in addition to cutting all the hay. She proudly mentions her new self-propelled haybine with an air-conditioned cab that makes the job much more pleasant. They save the hay baling for when their sons are home for summer vacation.

Snyder is a big supporter of sealed storage silos, "blue tubes"

son, Steve, and is currently contracted by several A.I. organizations.



Alice Snyder handles all feeding and raises calves in the stanchion barn without problems, although she'd like to have a calf barn.

as he speaks of them. With sealed storage there is no waste and a crop is only handled once, Snyder explained. He says that there are many "blue tubes" dotting his valley and a secret to keeping repair costs down is to make sure that the crop is not stored too wet. "You got to wait until it's dried down to 55; you got to wilt it one day," he said.

His cows also apparently appreciate the advantages of sealed storage. The year the Snyder's put in their first unit, the herd average jumped from 15,000 pounds to 17,000 pounds. They have continued to climb ever since. Today, there are three "blue tubes" on the Snyder farm and the Carl A. Farms Holsteins have been among

those at the top of the county for milk production for the past few years.

Contributing to the outstanding average is Carl A. Jetstream India. "India" is a Very Good - 88 daughter of Jetstream out of a Very Good - 82 Elevation. Her granddam is also a Very Good - 87 daughter of Arlinda Chief. With records over 27,000 pounds milk and 1000 pounds fat, India is currently contracted by Carnation Genetics, California, and Select Sires, Ohio. She was super-ovulated and flushed to K Way Apostle King Vick and is currently bred to Sweet Haven Tradition. Very proud of her, Snyder said that she receives no special treatment.

(Turn to Page A23)

Mark Snyder stands with "Dori," who received the Schuylkill award for the most milk and butterfat production.



"The best heifer I ever had," states Carl Snyder of Petula, a First Million daughter. Appraised at 85 as a two-year-old, she just milked 125 pounds on her third calf. Her Elevation daughter is projected to 22,000 pounds.

