

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



New. Improved. From deodorant to dog food, laundry soap to over-the-counter medications, the label "new, improved" makes it all better.

Or does it? More than once I've growled and grumbled while trying to open a "new, improved" type container, spout, lid or boxtop. And too often, those "new, improved" ingredients found inside may be no better than what was there before, and will undoubtedly cost more.

Anyway, this all came to mind as I realized over the past few days that my lifestyle has become "new, improved" in two small, but significant ways

First, culture has come to my calf feeding chores.

Well, maybe culture isn't exactly the term you'd use

It all depends on how you like rock music Or country Or that background, easy listening stuff they label "muzak," and play in your ear when you're put on hold on some telephone call.

Depending on who dials in the dairy barn radio, any of the above sounds may blare out toward the milking herd. To date, no study that I know of has ever determined which type radio music encourages the most contented cows or the highest production.

But last week, the farmer happened to come into ownership -

free - of a roll of unwanted electrical communications wire and an orphaned stereo speaker. This unexpected good fortune was too much to just ignore.

With just a few perfunctory electrical hookups, he extended a speaker from the cows' radio up into the heifer-calf raising areas, for my listening enjoyment.

While I have a speaker, I lack a dial, thus have no choice over the selection, unless I parade down to the dairy barn and spin out someone else's earlier selection. That would undoubtedly get me in trouble, especially on the nights that the kids help to milk.

In fact, that first night that I fed calves accompanied by blaring rock music, the farmer did come up to check up on me and make sure I was feeding, not doing the Curly Shuffle with a bag of calf feed

And as if that wasn't enough to revolutionize my lifestyle, a request of some 15 years has finally gone through the resident engineering departmental head.

Since a round of remodeling that took place when the teenager was a wee babe, the bathroom closet location has been smack dab over top of the laundry area in the basement.

For this past decade and a half, I have periodically pleaded to have a hole cut in the bottom of the

closet, so that the mounds of dirty barn clothes can simply dropped down to the washing machine.

Lo and behold, after this long time, a ten-minute bout with a noisy saw rendered a chunk of the floor on the basement cement and - viola! - you can now almost drop your dirty socks right in the spinning basket.

A dear friend who stopped by over the weekend took one look at my "new, improved" facilities and broke up in laughter. Seems that when she was a teenager, she became stuck in a similar laundry chute hole, while clowning around, and in humiliation had to be pushed-pulled out by her parents.

I think I'd better withhold a "new, improved" label until I see how many kids or cats I have to retrieve from the addition.



Maryland Lamb Cook-Off Scheduled

GLENELG — Entries are opened for the First Maryland Grand Lamb Cook-Off sponsored by the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association.

The Cook-Off which offers prizes of \$50, plus a Maryland lambskin, \$40, plus a gift pack of Maryland lamb, \$30, plus a Maryland leg of

lamb, and cookbooks for 10 finalists will be held May 5 at the Howard County Fairgrounds during the 11th Annual Sheep and Wool Festival.

A minimum of one pound of American lamb any cut must be used. Entries will be judged on taste (40 points), appearance (20 points), originality (20 points), and ease of preparation (20 points).

Prior to the May 5th Cook-Off, 10 finalists will be chosen to cook for the judges at the festival.

Deadline for entries is April 9. Send recipes along with complete preparation and cooking instructions, name, address, and phone number to Peggy Howell, 14584 Triadelphia Road, Glenelg, Maryland 21737 or call her at 489-4342

Gardening Programs Scheduled

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — Four programs on gardening and related topics, being sponsored by the Hunterdon County Extension Service, will be held in early spring. On March 27, 1984 at 7:30 p.m., vegetable gardening for the beginner and expert will be covered.

The March 29 9:30 a.m. program will be on small space and container gardening. A program dealing with animal and insect

pests around the home and garden will be held April 3, 7:30 p.m., and the series concludes on April 10, 7:30 p.m. with talks on rock gardens and herb gardening.

Select those that are of particular interest or attend all four. They will be held at the Extension Center, Route 31, Flemington; a \$1 fee will be collected at the door. Call (201) 788-1338 for more information and to register for the programs.

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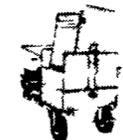
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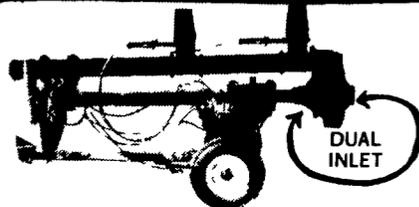
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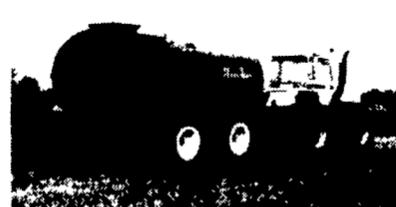
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