

## Computers & crops

(Continued from Page D9)

Although the drought may have reduced yields, Bill doesn't believe the crop's quality was dramatically affected. Even so, the Liptons have approximately one year's supply of corn silage in reserve if crop tonnage is ever severely reduced.

### Tailored rations

The rations fed at Pleasant View dairy are tailored to each cow's productivity. The dairy's typical bunk ration contains 19 pounds of high-moisture shell corn, 15-20 pounds of silage, 27 pounds of alfalfa haylage, six pounds of 40-percent soybean supplement and six pounds of cottonseed. Through the computerized feeding system, cows receive from three to 25 pounds of 20-percent low-soluble protein pellets, depending on production.

"We were one of the first dairies on the Northeast coast to try computerized feeding. We used to feed a basic ration in the bunk and then feed cows individually in the parlor according to production," explains Bill. "We switched to the computer three years ago when we were nearing a rolling herd average of 18,000 pounds. Cows were fed twice a day at that time and we couldn't feed them enough during the time they were in the parlor to meet their production needs. Furthermore, those two big intakes of feed could also make the cows more susceptible to acidosis.

"Now they can eat 24 hours a

day, which is better for their digestion," continues Bill. "Each cow carries a transponder around her neck. This transponder is programmed for how much feed she can receive during a 24-hour period, but no more than five pounds of feed is delivered each time a cow visits the feeder."

Initially, the switch to computerized feeding played havoc with the herd's production, but now Bill is well-satisfied with the system. "Our herd averaged plummeted by 2,000 pounds when we installed the system," he notes. "But once we got the bugs ironed out — with the help of our Harvestore sales representative who balanced our feeding program — production has steadily improved."

### Nothing wasted

Today, using a personal computer, Bill balances his own rations and tests them on a regular basis. "With computerized feeding, there's not a pound of feed wasted. And that's important today with the high cost of feed. In addition, we've pretty much eliminated the danger of cows overeating or undereating," Bill adds.

While quality forage and computerized feeding have helped boost milk production, Bill's aggressive breeding program is also accelerating productivity. "We raise our own replacements and are making rapid genetic gains with AI and embryo transfer," explains Bill. "Even though

I've attended AI school, I prefer to let a local inseminator handle the breeding."

Considerable progress has been made since 1967 when their rolling herd average was 12,000 pounds. Today it's close to 20,000 pounds, and Bill plans to keep improving upon that. "Our basic goal is to continue upgrading the genetic quality of our herd, and hopefully by doing so we'll continue to increase production.

"We're shooting for quality now," Bill continues. "I'm getting fussier and plan to gradually cull the herd to 100-150 of my best cows. I want good, quality breeding stock, and I'm working on building good pedigrees."

But even cows with top-notch breeding can't increase milk output without receiving quality feed. According to Bill, he doesn't have to worry about that. With Si and Jeff committed to consistently producing high-quality crops, the future productivity of Pleasant View Dairy looks promising.

## Elanco cites new herbicide

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — A new soybean weed control product specifically designed for reduced tillage, has been developed by Elanco Products Company. Called Conserve, the new product is said to allow farmers to get excellent quality weed control while reducing tillage passes and adopting modern conservation tillage practices.

Conserve is a basic soybean weed control for annual grasses and many broadleaf weeds. It can also be combined with special-purpose and broadleaf herbicides for specific weed problems.

"Elanco has developed Conserve to answer the needs of today's farmer," says Jerry C. Walker, Director of Agricultural Product Development for Elanco. "The farmer needs effective weed control that's easy to apply, whenever he chooses without

special tillage tools. Conserve answers those needs very well."

This new product has some unique features, according to Walker. "Conserve might be described as a combination of both existing and new technologies in a single formulation. As a result, it can do combinations of things, like providing long-lasting weed control with no carryover or crop injury. And it gives great flexibility to fit a farmer's changing tillage practices."

During 1984 this new product will be in an extensive demonstration program of Conserve Certifields, allowing farmers to certify for themselves the weed control performance in full-scale soybean production. Conserve Certifields will be available for farmer inspection during this growing season.

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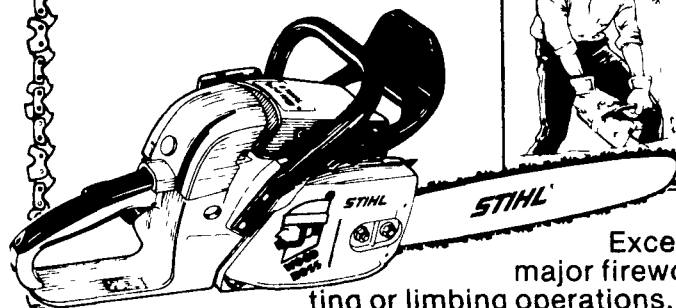
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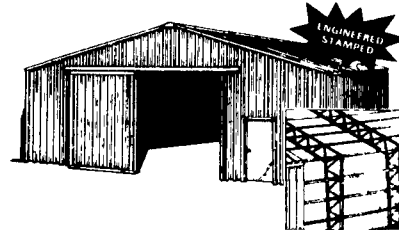
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