

On being a farm wife - And other hazards Joyce Bupp



Obsolete.

That's a scary word, applied regularly to the technology that invades our lives on all sides. Automobiles become obsolete. Airplanes become obsolete.

Who'd ever believe it could be applied to a farm wife?

Still, more and more, I find myself wondering if that adjective won't soon follow my name, sort of like a degree.

Like the bulky, first-generation of computers, today replaced by hand-held \$10 calculators, yours truly is fast becoming obsolete and outdated at various farm tasks by newer and better parts.

For instance, my once steady-use seat on the tractor, lugging the disk, the harrow, and the rake, has been replaced by 15- and 12-year-old operating mechanisms, of the same basic design, but perhaps more streamlined.

Admittedly, they do perform rather well, seem conscious of

maintenance and safety precautions, and possess an untiring operating mode that they would claim - endures longer than this original.

Besides, this old model never pursued studies in 4-H tractor club which instruct in the proper why's and wherefore's of sensible equipment operation.

My gearing mechanism, which regularly locks into the steering wheel of the family car, is still allowed to perform on a continuing basis, especially on the evenings when there is softball practice, 4-H meetings, or after-school activities.

Even that position, however, is getting a critical evaluation as we face a birthday looming ahead in just a few months on which that landmark 16th (driving age, Mom!) year is marked.

And lawn mowing chores, monkey-on-the-back of generations who faced greenery

cutting via the push-method, command the attention of this pair who squabble over who shall roar around the soggy back yard on the riding mower.

The pattern is repeating with regularity, spreading each year to bigger and better chores around the farm:

They run the lawn mower. I move piles of grass with a bamboo rake and wife-powered wheelbarrow.

They maneuver the baler and wagons. I throw down bales of hay... and miss the elevator more times than I care to admit.

They zip around on the motorcycle. I ride bike, my brother's old one. My motorcycle is still in pieces up in the shop.

They feed the cattle with silage carts and chuck wagons. I dump bags of calf feed.

Fact is, our second-generation of

helpers is becoming able, capable, and willing - well, most of the time. It's downright welcome to have a son who can bring you a bucket loader of stones or topsoil as needed, or a daughter willing to

milk and let Mon go feed the calves bawling their heads off in the nursery.

This being obsolete could become deliciously habit-forming.

Perry County 4-H Dairy Club

The Perry County 4-H Dairy Club met recently at the Ben Dum farm. Mr. Dum demonstrated the proper way to trim a cow's hooves.

Nancy Dum explained several brushing methods and showed members the different types of brushes used.

Jane Benner reported on the Penn State Dairy Science Club Invitational Dairy Judging Con-

test, where the club's team placed third. She also announced the club's top placing members of the Hoard's Dairyman Judging Contest. They are: Joan Brofe, first; Nancy Dum, second; and Vance Kretzing, Jenny Kriebel and Judy Kriebel, tied for third.

The next meeting will be on May 31 at the Ken Benner farm. The topic will be "showmanship."

WHITE WATER DAYS

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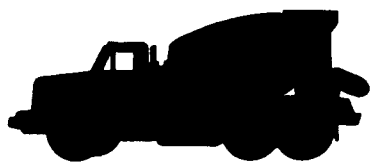


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