

Young dairy farmer says dedication is key to his success

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BECHTELSTVILLE — How can a young person with little farm background and no money get started in dairying? Impossible? No, not if you want it bad enough according to 21-year-old Tom Galloway, R1, Bechtelsville.

"It takes a lot of dedication," Tom says, "You've got to give up a lot of things." With a start of one grade Holstein heifer in 1976, Galloway is now milking 24 registered Jerseys, and has 16 additional heifers. His dream is to one day own a dairy with 40 milking Jerseys, he plans to fulfill this dream through more perseverance and dedication.

"When I started I didn't have anything, now..." Tom continues, "look where I am." Tom tells us his story.

Tom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Galloway, R1, Bechtelsville. Although his father has FFA experience to his credit, the family was more suburban than country. But, the younger Galloway liked cows. In 1976 he received a grade Holstein heifer for a Christmas present. That was the gift that changed things. Galloway worked for several dairymen in his area and he credits Lavern Moser, Bally, with encouraging him to join 4-H. For 4-H Galloway needed a registered animal, and since his father had Jerseys when he was in FFA, a Jersey calf was found and Galloway's start to his future herd began.

At his first show at the Kutztown Fair, Galloway states that he was first and last. His Jersey placed first in her class, but Tom placed last in showmanship. But that did not stop the determined, novice 4-H'er.

He kept on showing his Jersey and helping neighboring dairymen. His calf grew up and gave Tom a heifer calf. Soon, he saved enough money to purchase two more heifers.

In order to feed his growing herd, Tom received permission from area farmers to clean up their corn fields after they were finished picking corn. With the leftover corn that Tom cleaned out of acres and acres of fields, he was able to grind it to feed his animals. At this time his cows were hand milked in a shed behind his family's house and the milk was used to raise the calves.

It began to be a family affair as Tom's younger brother and two sisters, in addition to his parents, began to fall in love with the Jerseys. "My dad was helping me throughout," states Tom proudly. He says that without the support of his entire family he would not have made it this far.

In addition to his Jerseys, Tom was attending school where he was in band, working for neighboring farmers, and tending to his stock at home. "I had a lot going," he says.

With additional births and purchases Tom's herd kept growing. "It was getting to be too many (animals) to just go around and pick up field corn that they (neighboring farmers) missed," Galloway stated. So, he rented eight acres for corn and small grains. With the help of the local equipment dealer, he rented equipment, and Galloway started farming.

It was time to look for a bigger barn. The Jerseys had been handy to have at the home barn since it was only a 26'x16' shed and more



Tom poses in front of the dairy barn which he rents. It is about eight miles from his home and he remembers four years of rushing from school to the barn - and work - to further his goals.

animals could fit into it, but milking was also becoming a real chore. Tom bought a small vacuum pump and line and installed it in the shed at home. The heifers were taken to a rented barn. In 1980 he moved his animals to the present barn, a rented stanchion facility with some additional acreage and equipment which was also rented. "Soon after I got this place, I had to buy a milk tank, bucket milkers..." Tom continues.

Today, Tom milks 24 cows in this stanchion barn. He farms almost 50 acres in mostly hay and corn. He



Tom houses his older, open heifers in an open-sided pen. Here are two of his hopefuls for the showing.

still goes around fields and cleans up after farmers, but his spring marked the end of his other jobs and he began putting all his time into the dairy.

"I decided to invest my time in the cattle and be a dairy farmer," Tom says. "I had wanted to go to college," he says, but states that he loved the cows and farming and didn't want them to take second place in his time anymore.

Tom is proud of the fact that he is able to pay all his bills with his Jerseys, but adds that many sacrifices had to be made. "You appreciate it more," he says, "when you work to achieve something."

Other people noticed the diligence and dedication that this young dairyman displayed. "Three things helped me," Tom says. The equipment dealer, Harold Miller from Miller Equipment, assisted Tom continually with machinery. "He's always willing to help me," Tom states. Another big credit goes to the area farmers according to Galloway. "They try to steer me straight; they are there to help me," he says. His neighbors have planted and harvested his fields when Tom needed help, but he was always there to do his share and help them too.

"Most important," states Galloway, "are my parents and brother and sisters. Mom helps me if I'm tired. Dad really likes the cows," he continues adding that his father usually does the milking

while he does the feeding. "They all help me," he says proudly.

"Somebody 'upstairs' was trying to help me," Tom also adds, as he tells of his discouragement and impatience at times.

Tom is convinced that hard work and dedication pays off. He is very optimistic about his growing heifers and looks forward to forming a partnership with his father in the future on their own farm.

Galloway is currently on a genetic mating service and breeds his cows for production first and a usable type. He plans to continue showing with his sister and increasing his herd.

With all his bills current, a butterfat test ranging from 5.0 percent to 5.8 percent and heifers sired from the top bulls of the breed as his herd replacements, this young dairyman is proving that hard work can take the place of money in his dairy operation. In regard to other young people starting in the dairy business, Tom says, "I think they can make it if they try hard enough. Stay away from big, expensive equipment," he cautions.

"I'm doing something on my own. It's a big challenge," Tom states. His dream includes a modern dairy barn on his own farm with 40 head of registered Jerseys. "I want to make records on them... sell breeding stock," he adds. "Dedication," he keeps repeating about his efforts. "Look at where I am."



The Galloway herd tries to beat the heat under the shade in their pasture.



"Molly" was Tom's first Jersey. Now seven years old, Molly was the Grand Champion for Tom at several shows and is one of his best milkers.