

Berks family

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terfat test of 3.5% in the summer, going up to 4.0% in the winter. "I cut my haylage longer than most," Balthaser explains. He also attributes much of his success on this feeding program to the free choice haylage he offers the cows throughout the day in the meadow during the summer.

He also adds that the improved

ventilation in his barn also helps keep production up during the summer. With six fans currently in use, Balthaser plans on several more for next year's hot season.

Everything is chisel plowed on the Balthaser farm and many crops are also no-tilled. Balthaser shakes his head when he talks of all the hills on the farm and adds that two of the farms are completely

contoured and the rest of his acreage is strip farmed. Corn and hay are the major crops and Balthaser chisel plowed for alfalfa, too. "I didn't see any difference," he states.

Four years ago the Balthaser family also started raising their calves in hutches. "There's not a calf in the dairy barn anymore," Balthaser says and adds that there is no longer any sickness problems either. "As soon as they are dry, out they go," he continues. "They seem much perkier," LaVerne adds.

Balthaser also switches teat dips every year as part of his herd management changes. Because there may be a buildup of immunity to bacteria with a constant use of one kind of dip, he changes yearly. Many are tried with the exception of any iodine based products. "I didn't think I had as good control with an iodine base," he reasons. Corn stalks are used in the winter for bedding which also helps in his mastitis prevention program and all cows are routinely dry treated.

They belong to a variety of farm organizations and their children belong to several 4-H clubs. LaVerne enjoys making quilted pillows and quilts when she is not needed outside and also does canning for the family.

The Balthasers are also sharing their home this year with a foreign

exchange student from West Germany. Frauke Jens arrived at Northkill Creek Farm on August 23 and will be staying for ten months. LaVerne states that her first observation when she met their family was that they were "rich because they drove a big car." But then Frauke stated that her family owns a Mercedes. The family enjoys the exchange of cultures and is planning several trips and outings for Frauke to enjoy. She

said that she loved their sweet corn and added that she had never had it before.

You can meet the 1984 Outstanding Berks County Farm Family at the Reading Fair. They will be leading the opening parade and officiating at the ribbon cutting ceremonies. If you can't make it there, drive by their well kept homestead, halfway between Shartlesville and Bernville.

Welshans heads Dauphin Extension



James Welshans

UNIVERSITY PARK — James E. Welshans, associate county Extension agent for The Penn State University Cooperative Extension Service, has been named county Extension director in Dauphin County. He succeeds Harold E. Stewart, who retired.

Welshans' new position places him in charge of Dauphin County's Extension program. He will supervise a staff of 5 professionals. His other responsibilities include programming in home horticulture and agronomy.

Welshans, a native of Loganton, has been a member of the Clearfield County Extension staff since 1969. He holds a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from Morehead State University and a master's degree in extension education from Penn State.

In Clearfield County, Welshans was responsible for 4-H and youth programs as well as horticulture.

He is an active member of the Pennsylvania Association of County Agricultural Agents and Epsilon Sigma Phi, a national honorary Extension fraternity.

Welshans is married to the former Jane Ann Doudy. They have three children, Jeffery, Joel, and Jennifer.



Jason Balthaser helps to feed the calves.

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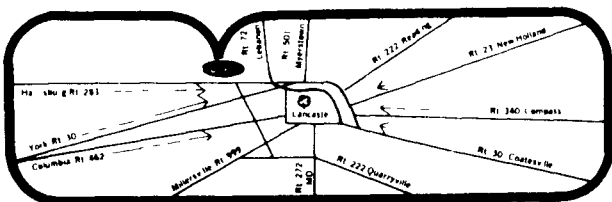
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