

Hostetter

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but we couldn't see where it fit for our operation," explains Hostetter. "You need a certain cash flow to keep operating, and when you're set up for a certain size you just have to stay at that level."

Hostetter does believe in full involvement in the dairy industry. And his participation in several cooperatives, such as Inter-State Milk Producers', Agway, and Sire Power, is evidence of that. He serves as president of the Lewistown local of Inter-State.

Inter-State has a quality premium program for clean milk, and because of his consistently low somatic cell count, Hostetter has missed the quality premium only once this year.

Hostetter feels his breeding program is not all that unique. "Like everybody, I'm breeding for better udders, and better feet and legs," he says. But he keeps an eye on test as well, to keep that herd average at or above four percent. They've had a few excellent

cows in the herd, and there are some very good animals milking well for them now. A few years ago they seemed to have a run on heifer calves and so the Hostetters were selling quite a bit of breeding stock. They've had heifers exported to Europe as well.

Along with good management of the cows goes good management of the soil. Building a manure pit about five years ago fit in with more than one of the Hostetter priorities - saving labor and saving the land and water.

"I figure I save at least an hour each day by not having to haul manure," says Hostetter. They clean out the solids from the pit twice a year, applying the manure to the fields at the time that it is best for the crops and the soil, and when there will be the least loss of nutrients in run-off.

When designing and building the manure storage facility, Hostetter chose to put a ten-by-ten picket dam in one corner. The liquid that collects in it, which has a lot of

nutrients, is pumped out onto the pastures around the farm buildings. The dry cows have access to the most pasture, and Hostetter noted that the grass in the pastures has really been lush since they've had the manure pit.

Other conservation practices that Hostetter was cited for in the national soil and water conservation awards program were strip and contour farming, winter cover crops, diversion terraces, grass waterways, and tile drains. He believes no-till planting is a sound conservation measure, and he has been very pleased with the yields from his no-till corn and alfalfa.

Just last spring Hostetter purchased a no-till seeder, only the second one that he knows of in Mifflin County. The alfalfa that he sowed no-till gave him a better stand than that planted by conventional methods.

Hostetter also plants about three quarters of his corn no-till. He explained that he likes to double-crop, planting corn right in the alfalfa after taking off the first cutting. His yields in these corn fields have been really good.

"The way I see it," states

Hostetter, "Farmers need to voluntarily conserve our resources before the regulations are passed, before you have to get a permit to even plow your fields."

And the other point that Hostetter makes is that conservation actually pays, such as in savings of fuel and fertilizer. When it comes down to it, run-off of fertilizers is a loss for everyone.

When asked whether he had a

greater love for crop farming or dairying, Hostetter firmly replied that he was committed to both. "The whole thing is a challenge, and I like to make it go, to run a successful operation."

So with the proper mix of conservation and innovation in his dairy operation, Hostetter does "make it go," and he enjoys the challenge and responsibility of it all, too.

York Holstein Assn. to meet

DALLASTOWN — Milk marketing and promotion will be the focus of the annual York County Holstein Association meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 24, at Blymire's Church Hall on Blymire Road.

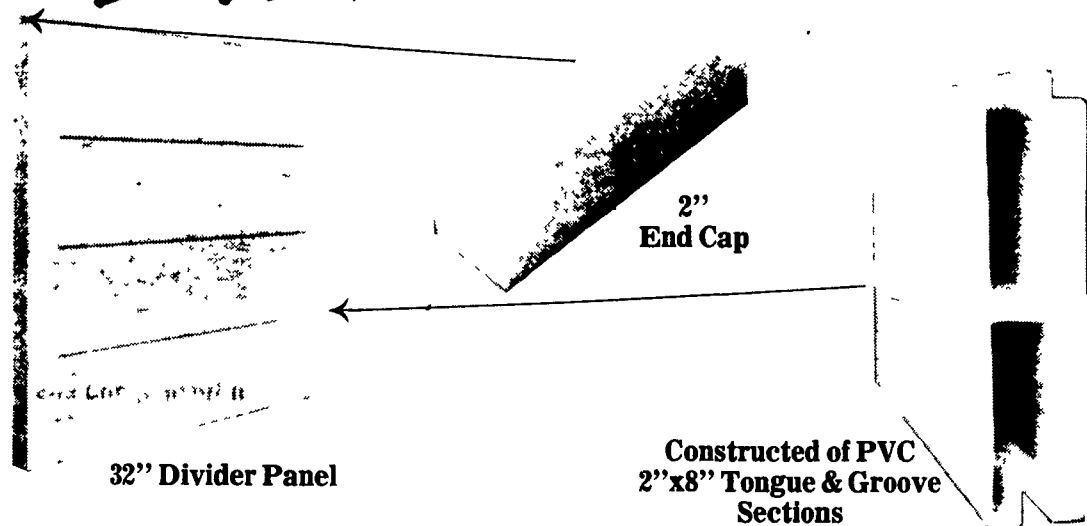
Dinner will proceed the annual business meeting and election of new directors to the county board.

Cost of dinner tickets are \$7 for adults and \$4 for children. Tickets are available from banquet chairman Charles Rauhauser, 292-1782, president Rodney Smyser, 792-2788, county club directors or the Extension office, 757-9657.

Reservations deadline for the annual Holstein dinner is Oct. 15.

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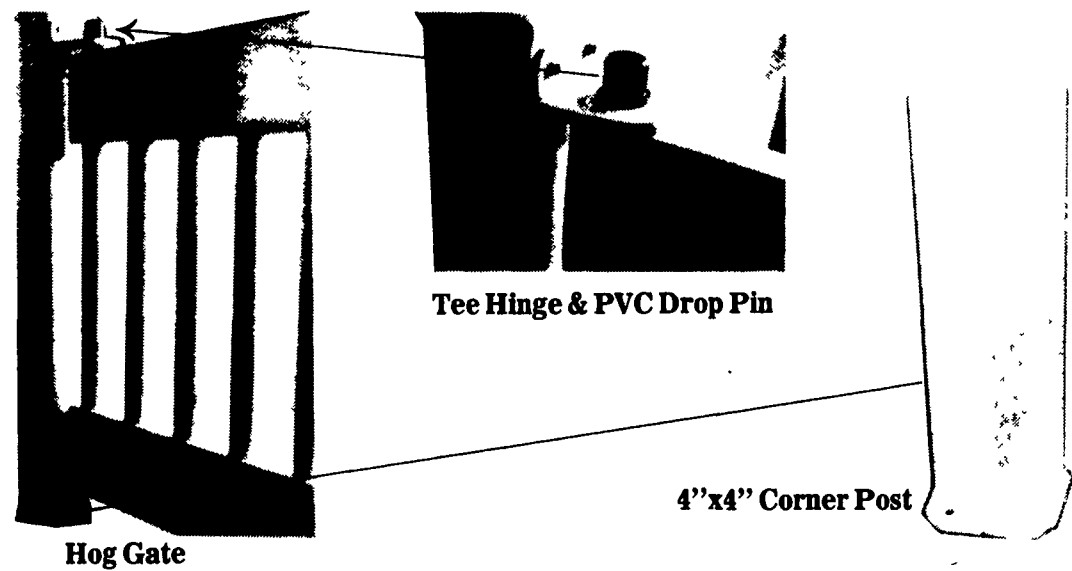
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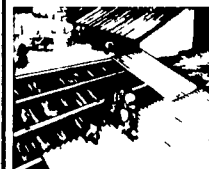
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