

Heifer AI is needed on every dairy farm

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Tight economic times like those the dairy industry is currently facing, generally lead to cut-backs on out-of-pocket expenses and a reevaluation of current practices. Many dairy farmers have responded to this situation by discontinuing artificial insemination (a.i.) of heifers and have reverted to breeding them by natural service.

This is a false economy which will come back to haunt you for years to come. Of all the animals in your herd, heifers are the best to breed a.i., especially with higher prices semen.

Sound management decisions require full understanding of both the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives. The advantages commonly given for using a.i. in the milking herd apply equally to heifer a.i. These advantages include: 1) a wider selection of genetically superior sires, 2) more complete knowledge of the genetic value of bulls, 3) knowledge of exact breeding dates, 4) easier control or prevention of reproductive diseases, 5) screening of bulls for fertility, 6) screening of bulls for genetic defects, and 7) the safety of a.i. over handling bulls.

Besides these general advantages, there are some which apply specifically to heifers.

The major benefit from using a.i. on heifers is that this practice increases the genetic progress of your herd. Progress per year is

determined by dividing genetic progress per generation by the number of years in a generation. Heifer a.i. affects both portions of this equation since it increases genetic progress per generation and shortens the generation interval, thus increasing progress per year.

It's well known that heifers often have more calving difficulties than older cows. Extensive "calving ease" information has been collected on bulls in a.i. This has led to calving-ease summaries which allow dairymen some genetic control over calving problems. This won't eliminate all calving difficulties, since these can be due to many causes, but it will reduce their frequency.

Heifer fertility is another argument in favor of a.i. As cattle age, fertility and conception rate decrease. Thus heifers are the best animals to breed a.i.—especially when you're using expensive semen.

Finally, heifer a.i. will increase the number of herd replacements available for culling or dairy sales. Some dairy farmers breed their heifers to beef bulls with the idea this will reduce calving difficulties.

In my experience, the facts don't support this theory. What's more, this practice results in offspring unsuitable for dairy herd replacement. And under less than ideal calf raising conditions, this means the number of replacements available each year may not be enough to maintain herd size. So you could end up having to buy replacements at a

cost higher than home-raising. Those purchased replacements may also be of poorer genetic merit than calves you raise yourself from heifers.

Artificial insemination of the heifer herd is a management tool which should be used on every dairy farm. The many advantages easily justify the added work. If

you're thinking of dropping your current heifer a.i. program, think again. If you don't have one now, seriously consider adding one. The result will be a genetically superior herd that produces milk more efficiently and progresses faster genetically—both factors which will increase the profitability of your dairy operation.

Chester-Del. Pomona installs first woman as Master

WEST CHESTER — New Officers were installed at last week's meeting of Chester-Delaware Pomona Grange #3.

Mrs. J. Edwin Cook of West Chester was installed as the first woman Master in the 110-year history of the county organization. Other officers are Overseer-David Wanner, Honey Brook; Steward-Harold Rennard, Goshen; Asst. Stewards Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hook, Russellville; Chaplain - Mary Jane Pennoyer, Marshallton; Treasurer - C. Wilmer Supplee, Goshen; Secretary - Mrs. Henry Huber, Goshen; Gatekeeper - Kelvin Spotts, Russellville; Ceres - Mrs. Carroll Pratt, London Grove; Pomona - Virginia Buf-

fington, Kennett; Flora - Mrs. Harold Rennard, Goshen; Executive Committee member - Terry Murray, Russellville; Finance Committee member - Robert Chambers, East Lynn; Lecturer - Mary Sproat, London Grove.

Judging was held for the photography contest. Winners were Deborah Warren, Chris Morris, and Karen Prints of Chester Valley, Mary Sproat of London Grove, Elaine Reiter of Brandywine, and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hook of Russellville. Mrs. Chester Warren won first prize for her oil painting.

Junior photography winners were Andrew Huber of Goshen and Mark Morris of Chester Valley.

Winner in the fudge contest and tating contest was Mrs. Raymond Earnhart of Oxford.

Winners of the Pumpkin-Growing Contest were Mrs. Lynn Spotts for oddest shape and Charles Harris for the largest.

Grangers are promoting the use of smoke alarms in cooperation with the Jamesway Store at New Garden Shopping Center.

Chester-Delaware Pomona Grange #3 will celebrate its 110th Anniversary with a banquet and program May 18. Committee chairmen for the event are Mr. and Mrs. Charles Harris of Russellville.

Seventeen new members were initiated into the Fifth Degree.

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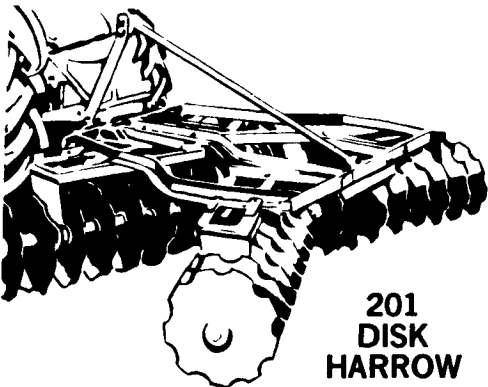
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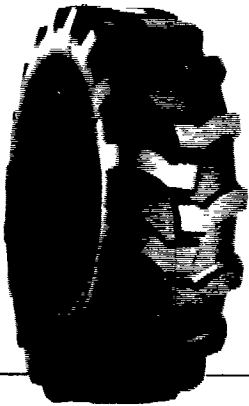
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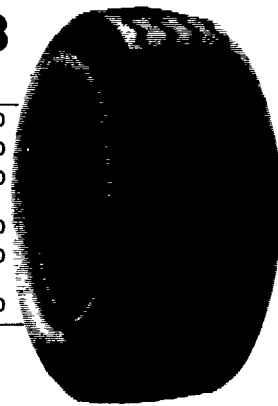
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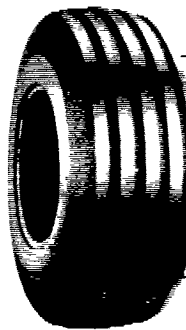
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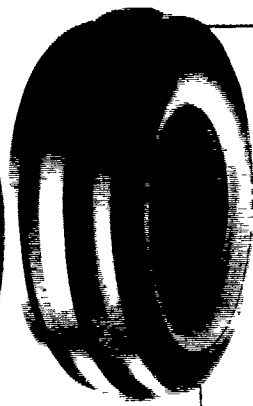


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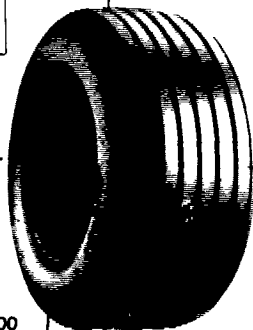
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