

**On being
a farm wife
- And other
hazards
Joyce Bupp**



Spots are dancing before our eyes a lot lately.

No, the problem isn't that we've been, shall we say, over-indulging. These spots all dance around on four legs, tails flying behind them.

Since July, cows freshening in the dairy herd have delivered more than forty heifer calves. While the male-female ratio of babies evens out to about fifty-fifty over long periods of time, it isn't uncommon to have runs of either high percentages of bull or heifer calves at a certain time

There was a time when I suspected it had something to do with barometric pressure, or topographical layout, or some strange condition of the water. Not so. Every dairy farmer we've ever discussed this phenomenon with seems to experience the same lopsided percentages of bulls or heifers at some time.

As it turns out, many of the lively young ladies born in this long stretch of female deliveries are the offspring of a young bull that we are helping to "prove." Proving a bull takes many years, because the chances of merchandising him commercially are based on the performance of his grown-up daughters.

They must compare favorably to daughters of other bulls, by being exceptional milkers, while possessing oodles of desirable dairy characteristics.

Or, at least the computer printout projections say that they should do that, even though the computer projections may be all wet a couple of years down the line.

Thus far, Lasso—the young bull in question—has a number of pluses going for him: his calves show plenty of size and growth, are reasonably endowed with all the right stuff, and seem blessed with extremely pleasing personalities.

But, about all those spots

Lasso's ancestry tends toward spotted coats, backgrounds of white with black dottings liberally splashed hither and yon.

All those little baby girl calves

Christmas Tree

Growers to meet

SCHUYLKILL HAVEN - Christmas tree growers and individuals interested in growing Christmas trees are invited to a program sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Services of Berks and Schuylkill Counties.

Dr. Paul Heller, a Penn State University entomologist, will give an update on insect control. John French, biotech, will discuss Christmas tree diseases and update Bravo.

Terry Stehr, Schuylkill County executive director of ASCS, will explain cost sharing of cover crops in Christmas tree plantings.

This meeting will qualify you for pesticide recertification.

The meeting will be held Monday, Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. at the Penn State Campus in Schuylkill Haven. For additional information, contact George P. Perry Jr., county agent - horticulture, 717-385-3431, or Herbert A. Wetzell, county agent, Berks County, 215-378-1327.

must be registered with the Holstein breed association. In order to do so, a sketch of the color patterns on both sides and the head of each calf must be submitted on an official registry application paper.

Show me any calf that will stand still for several minutes while a farm wife or daughter (who usually inherits this job) reproduces her markings and I'll show you a calf that probably needs medical attention. Immediately

Need I say it? Lasso's calves are often spotted. Soon, the oldest ones will have their own first calves (spotted, I'll betcha), and we'll see how all these dancing spots are going to turn out in comparison to their herdmate sisters.

I've hunted to the farmer that he might consider an almost-all-black bull to prove in the future. Still, I know full well that genetic potential—not simplicity of drawing for sketchers—will continue to determine such future decisions.

Maybe we could make some kind of arrangements to charge for sketching, by the spot?

Delaware 4-H'er wins Bob Evans quarter horse

BY CLAIRE McCABE

NEWARK, Del. — Jean Staats, a 13-year-old from Wyoming, Del., is this year's winner of a Bob Evans quarter horse weanling. Jean is calling her four-month-old colt Bar while waiting to hear from the American Quarter Horse Association on the official acceptance of her first choice name, Bekays Gold Bar.

Each year the famous sausage-maker and restaurateur Bob Evans holds a Western-style roundup, complete with campfires and trail rides, on his 1,100-acre farm in Ohio. He invites to this event one lucky 4-H teenage from each of the 11 states where his products are sold. These teens, chosen on the basis of citizenship and exemplary performance in the 4-H horse project, return with their own quarter horse weanlings.

Bar, a buckskin, was just the horse Jean wanted. "I had picked the number four," she said, "and he was the fourth horse to come down the chute."

Jean is the youngest of Jimmy and Barbara Ann Staats' three children. She is in her fifth year of the 4-H horse project, but has been showing horses since she was five years old. Jean credits the Niblett family of D & B Farms, a quarter horse and boarding stable in Bear, for much of her knowledge of horses.

Dick and Betty Niblett are strong supporters of the 4-H horse project. They first supplied Jean with one of their ponies to use in shows, and later matched her with a pony that needed a good home.

The Niblett's two daughters, Jane and Kay, helped Jean with riding and showmanship. Their son, Richie, drove his truck and trailer to Ohio to carry Bar home



Delaware 4-H'er Jean Staats recently won a quarter horse colt from Bob Evans Farm.

to Delaware.

Jean showed her pony, Brownie, in showmanship and walk-trot classes, and later showed its foal, J.B. (born on Jean's birthday) on halter. But she soon needed a larger horse to ride, so her parents bought her an aged gelding, Sandy.

Jean showed Sandy at 4-H shows, the Delaware State Fair and on the Eastern Shore Western Horse Show Association circuit. In 1983 she won first place in showmanship at the state fair, and in 1984 she was honored as the first recipient of ESWHSA's good sportsmanship award.

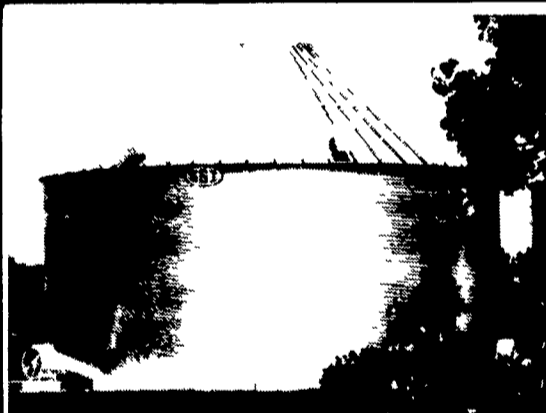
Due to his age, Sandy was sometimes not up to par for show use. "But he's a great horse," says Jean. "I've learned so much from him. He taught me what colic was all about and how heartbreaking it can be for your horse to go lame or become sick on a show day. Now I'm ready to accept the responsibility for a young horse to train, work with and love."

Bar will be trained as a Western horse. Although he can't be ridden until he is two years old, Jean has already begun training him on a halter and plans to show him this spring. She has use of her aunt's horse, Al, until Bar can be ridden. Jean won first place with Al in a showmanship class at this year's state fair.

Besides being her 4-H club secretary, Jean has helped the club with shows and contests. Her winning manner is also evident outside the ring. In keeping with the generosity shown her, Jean has lent her ponies to younger 4-H members. During her free periods at Caesar Rodney Junior High School she helps out in the library of nearby Nellie H. Stokes Elementary School.

Jean likes working with younger children and has considered youth counseling as a possible career. "I've had so many older friends who have helped and advised me. I'd like to do the same for others," she says.

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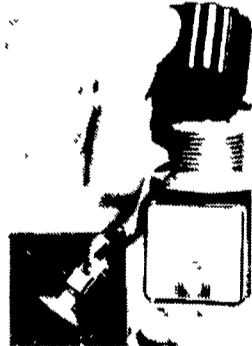
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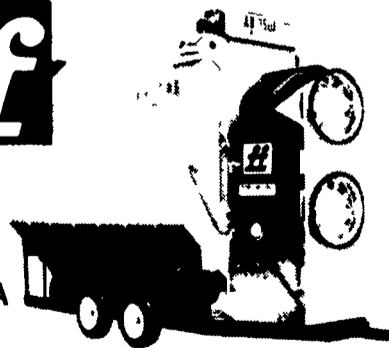
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