

State Distinguished Junior Holstein Member

# Luke Bowser looks toward bright future in dairying

**BY BETSY STITT**  
Staff Correspondent  
NEW ENTERPRISE — The hard work and long hours needed to put together a Junior Holstein Member Scrapbook was worth the effort for Luke Bowser, who was recently named the State Distinguished Junior Holstein Member at the state convention.

Luke is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bowser, who live on a farm in New Enterprise along with their 55-cow dairy herd. Growing up and working with his parents around the farm sparked an interest and helped Luke decide to become a Holstein breeder.

Luke currently owns 24 dairy animals, which have a rolling herd

average of 16,500 pounds of milk. Although he likes them all, Singing Brook Pete Billie A is probably his favorite. Using her and her dam, Luke is hoping to build up his herd.

Luke also owns a quarter interest in a Troy daughter with Bill Pettit of Huff and Puff. A two-year-old, she is scored 87. They have several contracts on her and they may pursue an embryo interest.

In outlining his responsibilities on the farm, Luke said. "I do a little bit of everything, but my main job is caring for the dairy herd." He works closely with the feed mill to maximize production. Through a program called Extra-Factors, the mill tests the forage and then tailors the grain ration,



Luke and Julia look over the Bowser herd, their future in the dairy industry.

which is fed according to production. Luke said they top dress the high producers' rations with soybean meal.

Luke also makes the breeding decisions. He said he likes to breed with bulls that will make something good on the first generation. Some of the bulls he is currently using are Star Wars, Tempo and Elevation.

Luke is beginning to pay more attention to protein production when selecting bulls. Although his milk company is not yet paying for protein, Luke thinks they will be in three to five years and by then he will have his cattle producing more protein.

Playing the numbers game is something Luke shies away from. "I chose bulls to improve my cows in both type and production, not by their numbers," he said.

He does not understand why for so long the Holstein industry bred

cows for function and longevity and made great progress and now looks only at numbers. Luke thinks that this could slow progress.

Luke likes fancy cows that last. "Cows that last 10 to 12 years are going to pay more bills," he said.

One of Luke's goals is to breed the first 100 point cow. Other goals include having a 20,000 pound herd average with a 4.3 test, because he thinks butterfat is going to become more important. He would also like to have a comfort stall barn with computer feeders and a smaller herd of 45 to 50 really good cows.

Luke has been an avid showman for a number of years. He is a member of the Morrison's Cove 4-H Dairy Club and the Northern Bedford FFA. Between the two clubs, he said, he has become addicted to showing.

Even when he is too old for these groups, Luke said he plans to continue showing. One of his goals,

he noted, is to "win big" at the National Shows.

Luke was a member of the 4-H judging team, which he credits for helping him to recognize good cows. The knowledge he gained as a team member also helps in the merchandising business, which he has recently become active in. Luke said it is a little hard to sell an animal, but he is getting used to it and has been able to buy better animals with the funds he received from selling.

Luke has mixed feelings about selling cattle to foreign countries. "It is a big market with a lot of potential," he said, "but I would sooner be sending them our dairy products."

In talking about the current dairy situation, Luke has doubts about the herd buyout program. However, he said, he thinks a quota system would work. He also

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Luke Bowser and his wife, Julia, look over the scrapbook that won in the state contest.

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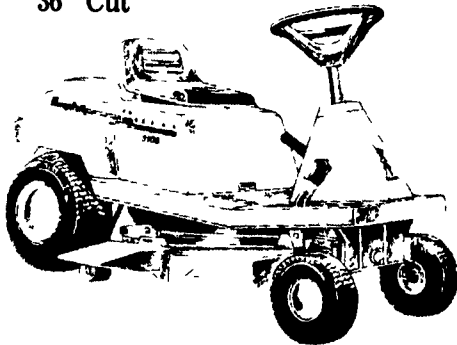
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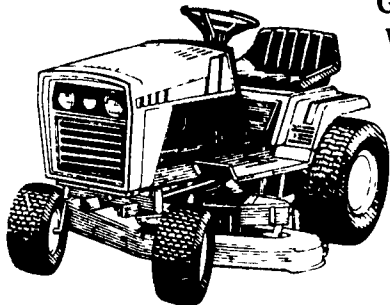
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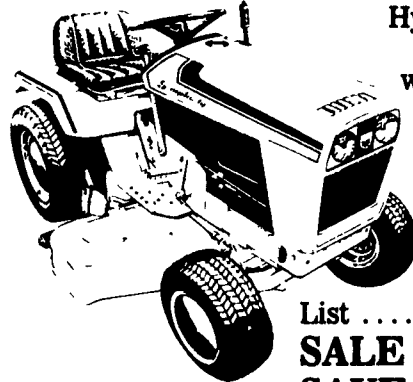
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