

Split Embryo Calves

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plained reason) is pinched into two parts as it enters the uterus. This happens rarely.

By genetic manipulation, the embryo splitting offers two main advantages. First, it increases the potential number of offspring per flush. Second, producing genetically identical twins could have a positive influence on the cost and time required to conduct progeny testing. Progeny testing amounts to a five year investment in which a breeder's money is tied up in valuable stock with AI producers.

Wolff presently has 300 bulls in programs found in more than a dozen foreign countries and many of the more notable studs in this country- ABS, Sire Power, Atlantic Breeder, L A B C, Worldwide, Golden Genes and many more. Through genetic engineering, time saved is money earned.

Embryo splitting, flushing, implanting and marketing of superior Holsteins is routine on the Wolff farm. However, the donation of the valuable twin calves to the transplant program was made for another even more important and unrelated reason.

This is the second part of the story.

The Wolffs, Dennis and Lois want to make the public aware of the critical and chronic shortage of organ donors. A donor organ holds the precious gift of life for critically ill patients with diseased organs.

Dennis and Lois are painfully aware of what a donor organ means. Their 19-month-old baby, Nicholas, was diagnosed as having biliary atresia when he was six-weeks old. This mysterious liver disease strikes one out of every 15,000 babies and there is no successful treatment.

The Wolffs have traveled from one end of the country to the other hoping to find a hospital that could help before Nicholas became too ill for an operation. But, two factors blocked a quick solution; Nicholas was not yet critical and there is a lack of suitable donors of his age and size.

This age group is also the most safety monitored of our society and therefore are a rare donor source.

Only one hospital placed Nicholas at the top of their transplant list, Minnesota Hospital and Clinic of Minneapolis.

The family kept a constant telephone availability waiting for a call from this hospital or any of the others they had contacted. On May 27 at 4 p.m., their months of tension came to an end. A call from the Minnesota hospital stated that a donor liver was available.

Six hours later, Nicholas was in the Minneapolis hospital being prepared for surgery. After an

eight hour operation, the little transplant patient emerged from the ordeal in good shape.

A week after the operation, Nicholas was perched in a little red wagon roaming the hospital halls with only the inconvenience of an intravenous tube. "He is active, walking around and seems very normal," a report his father was happy to call back to Pennsylvania.

Baby Wolff will be kept in the hospital for a couple of weeks to monitor rejection and infection, both routine ailments associated with the transplant. When medication is regulated to the surgeons satisfaction, Nicholas can return home.

The donor liver was from a 13-month-old infant who died in a Memorial Day car crash in Colorado. It was obtained through the St. Paul chapter of the American Red Cross.

Through the donor promotion effort being waged by the Wolffs,

they have learned that professionals such as nurses and doctors are often reluctant or lack training in the method by which the family of a possible donor can be approached. For instance, if a young child has been declared brain dead because of an accident, the tremendous emotion at that time for both the family and hospital staff is overwhelming.

New York state has a law making it mandatory for hospitals to have trained people on their staff for just this situation.

Pennsylvania has introduced a similar bill which is presently in the Health and Welfare Committee of the Senate. The Wolffs urge people to write their state legislators to support House Bill 90.

Experience has shown that those families who agree to organ donation from a deceased loved one experience great comfort and consolation as time passes. It's a therapy that cannot be provided by any other means.

Columbia County Correspondent

Helen Kelchner

Lancaster Farming's new Columbia County correspondent is Helen Kelchner of Berwick.

Helen says her freelance writing and photography grew out of a need to keep busy at "something other than housekeeping." When her four children were through high school, she began to take her writing and photography seriously.

Helen was born and lived on a farm in Lewisburg for 16 years. In 1940 her family moved to Berwick, where she finished school, married and raised a family. "My husband's business did not lend itself to rural living, so my farming background lay dormant until several years ago," Helen said.

Although her first sales were nature photography and feature stories for the Harrisburg Patriot, Helen says she found her favorite subjects in a farm setting. "Having lived in what I call the 'dark ages' of farming, I had much to learn in the computer age where some dairy operations are automated from the silo to the emptying of the manure pit and all points in between," Helen notes.

Draft horses are one of Helen's pet subjects, especially the few owners and breeders



Helen Kelchner

who continue to use horses as cultivation power.

Helen is 60 years old and would like to remain active as long as she has a story to write. Her work has appeared in the Harrisburg Patriot, the Reading Eagle, Baltimore Sun, the Evener, Draft Horse Journal (Iowa), Small Farmers Journal (Eugene, Oregon), Horse Illustrated, and Dog Illustrated (California), various church publications and local papers in Berwick, Sunbury, Williamsport and Wilkes Barre.

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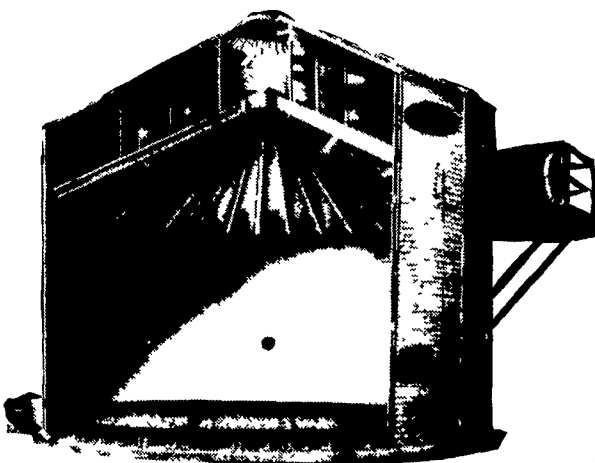
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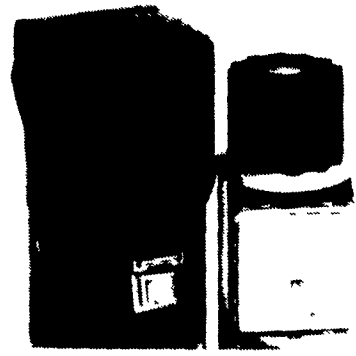
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