

Holstein Dairy Tour Travels To Franklin County

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GETTYSBURG — Thirty-seven Adams County Holstein breeders departed from Gettysburg, Tuesday, July 15th, under cloudless skies in the Adams County Holstein Club's annual dairy tour. This year's tour included a visit to six dairy operations in Franklin County and lunch at the Gibbles Restaurant.

Franklin County has 550 dairy farms with 40,500 cows producing 575,100,000 pounds of milk valued at \$81 million dollars annually. The county's dairy industry ranked 32nd among counties in the nation in 1982.

The first stop of the day was at Aldina Holsteins, Alvin and Diana Meyers, Chambersburg; which is noted for their superior type. The all-registered, all-homebred herd, currently houses five Excellent cows. Their most current B.A.A. is 105.7. Canadian bulls have been used heavily here with pedigree signs over the cows reading of Canadian matings which include such sires as Ronbeth Telmart, Roybrook Tempo, Quality Ultimate, Triple Threat and Bootmaker.

This herd also knows how to work with a rolling herd average on 55 cows of 19,500 pounds of milk and 720 pounds of fat. Meyers attributes this high fat output to his Canadian breeding and his management. He stressed feeding lots of hay and his grain ration includes ear corn, supplement, and a top dressing for fresh cows that consists of seven parts bean meal and three parts distillers grain.

This is a total family operation which includes the Meyers' two children, Rodney, 19, and Beverly, 18. Alvin and Diana were formerly in partnership with Alvin's father, Lester, who still helps on the farm.

Traversing the county, the group's next stop was in the Duffield area where the best limestone soil in the county is located. Driving in the macadam lane of Ricecrest Farm, Fred and Dale Rice, wide variegated green strips of corn and alfalfa gave little evidence of the dry weather that dominates most of the county.

In his welcoming comments Fred Rice stressed, "We like to put our money in cattle and cattle facilities. We don't have a lot of fancy equipment. We don't like to put our money into something we only use three or four days a year."

Their priorities are evident by the building and expansion work that the Rices have done primarily in the last two years. They have constructed, all with in-house labor, an opensided drive-through barn with 104 self-locking headgates with a misting system to keep the cows cool. Rices put in bunker silos where they store all their haylage and corn silage. They also now have a stepped gravity flow manure handling system and pit. The latest building

project is a new milkhouse and double 10 parallel parlor.

Their cows have responded well to the extra comfort with 160 head averaging 18,415 pounds of milk and 662 pounds of fat. Included in their breeding program are such popular sires as Gold, Simon and Tony.

Two cows that they are particularly pleased with are a daughter-dam pair. The dam, Ricecrest Gemini Jayanna VG-87 with a relative dollar value of \$138, is carrying two bull contracts and was recently flushed. Her daughter, Ricecrest Spirit Jane VG-85, has a relative dollar value of \$160.

Strong cow families with exceptional type was the highlight of the group's pre-lunch stop, Antrim Spring Farm, Harold F. Crider, Chambersburg. Crider's 59 cow herd has a B.A.A. of 105.8 which include seven homebred Excellents. Harold notes that the herd represents 30 years of building, recalling that he first classified in 1963 and had only one Very Good cow. In those 30 years he has bred 25 Excellent cows.

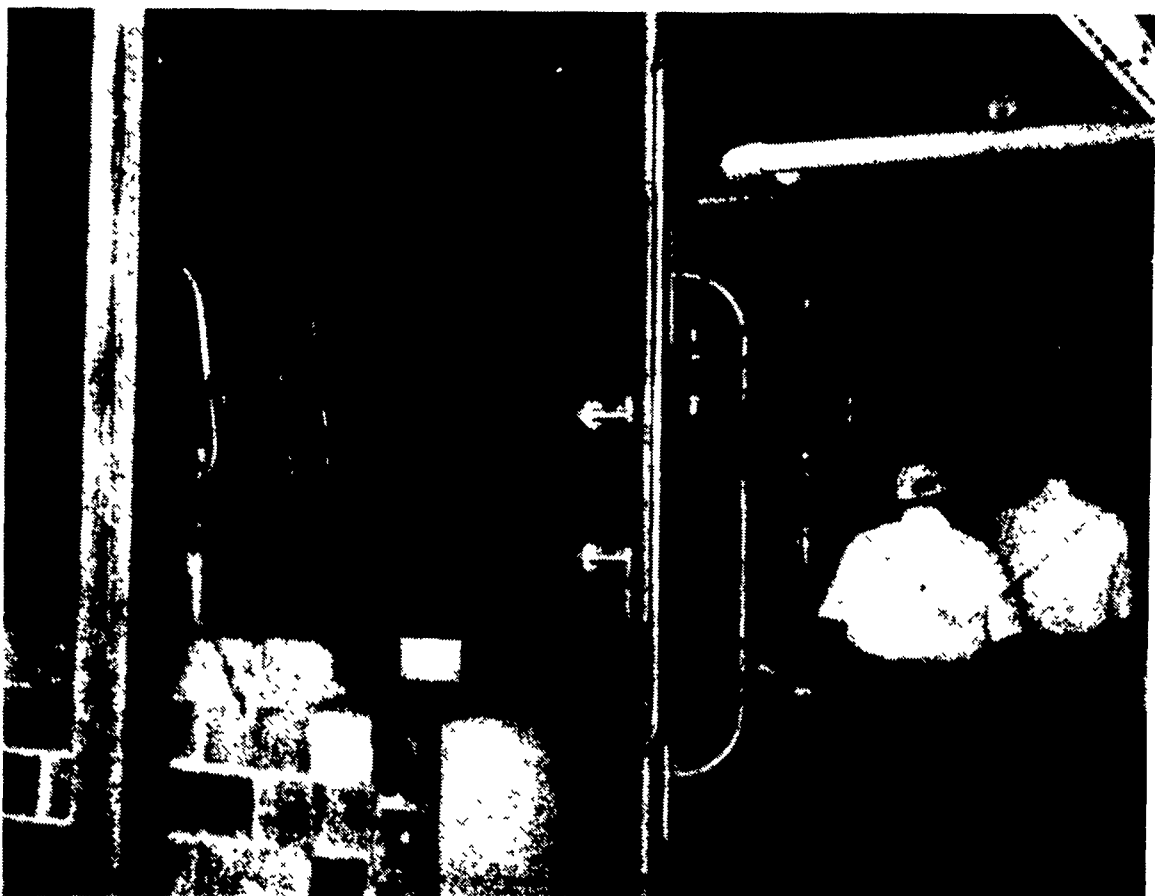
Leading the group behind the cows in his stall barn, Crider pointed out Elevations, Milestones, Bells, and Pete daughters, relating their several generations of Very Good and Excellent dams and granddams. The Criders are presently milking 10 ET offspring by Elevation. Their current rolling herd average is 19,604 pounds of milk and 693 pounds of fat. Crider stated that more cows in the herd are now bred to Banner than to any other service sire.

Quizzed on the value of indexes versus cow families for merchandising, Crider stated, "Maybe I'd have more milk if I had used the production bulls, but I have all the milk I want. You can't just breed by the numbers and get the kind of cattle you want. But, no question, when it comes to merchandising, the indexes are where it's at."

Following lunch at Gibbles Restaurant, the group traveled to the county's second highest DHIA herd, Oakleigh Farm, Ed and John Brake, Mercersburg. Their 114 cows are averaging 20,700 pounds of milk and 775 pounds of fat.

Founded in 1883, Oakleigh Farm derived its name from five huge oak trees that once stood in the surrounding fields. Only one of the original oak trees is still standing, but new oaks have been planted close to the buildings. Originally a major horse farm in the early 1900's, the dairy took over in the 1940's. Their parlor was the second earliest milking parlor built in Franklin County and is still in use today.

Theirs is a registered breeders' herd with commercial cow management. The cattle are housed in a recently remodeled loafing barn where they are fed urea treated corn silage, haylage, and lots of alfalfa hay. All grain is fed in the parlor.



Adams County Holstein Breeders viewed the new parallel parlor being installed at Ricecrest Farm, Chambersburg, as part of the groups tour of six dairy operations in Franklin County. Here the side of the parlor is shown in the release position.

Oakleigh's production records have not gone unnoticed by the studs or sale selection committees. They have already placed four bulls into AI and are currently flushing cows carrying contract matings. One such individual pointed out to the group was a VG-85 Bell daughter with a 3-year-old record in 305 days of 26,050 pounds of milk and 770 pounds of fat. She is consigned to this year's Ag Progress Days Sale.

Traveling through some of the drier parts of the county, the group arrived at Jim and Nina Burdett's, Windy-Knoll-View Farm, Mercersburg. The Burdetts are members of the Genuine Genetics Syndicate that is currently leasing the Gold bull to ABS.

Windy-Knoll-View Holsteins was established in 1975 and since that time the Burdetts have bred nine Excellent cows and developed four others. Their current rolling herd average is 18,500 pounds of milk and 609 pounds of fat on 64 cows. The operation consists of 240 acres and a herd of 125 head of which 95

percent carry the Windy-Knoll-View prefix.

A special feature here was a preview of the Burdetts heifer showstrung for this season which include daughters of Gold, Lad, Banner, Quality Ultimate and Kit Builder. Highlighting the line-up was Windy-Knoll-View Lad Jina Two, the Honorable Mention All-Pennsylvania Summer Yearling in 1985. Jina Two is due to Straight Pine Elevation Pete. Her dam is the queen of the Windy-Knoll-View herd, Windy-Knoll-View Kit Josephine EX-90 2E, with a 3-10 365 day record of 22,007 pounds of milk, 3.6 test, and 782 pounds of fat.

For their final stop, the group toured Meadow Vu Farm, Robert and Rhodina Eckstein, Mercersburg. A familiar face in Holstein circles, Bob has served as the Franklin County Holstein Club Sales Representative, a 4-H leader, and as a fitting and showing judge for 4-H and FFA shows. For the past several years Bob has been the chairman of the county Dairy Promotion Committee.

Meadow Vu Holsteins are in free stall housing and are milked in a single row stable. The herd average is over 19,700 pounds of milk and they have a B.A.A. of 105.00.

When asked about their breeding program, Eckstein stated, "Today you've got to talk out of both sides of your mouth. We like type and production. I won't use a bull with low repeatability or less than 600 pounds of milk." Eckstein stressed that the herd is 100 percent AI bred including the heifers that are bred to calve at not later than 27 months of age.

A family favorite that caught visitors eyes as well was a 13-year-old Rag Apple daughter, Meadow Vu Rag Apple Alice 92-4E. Her best effort was at 7-10 with 22,774 pounds of milk and 88 pounds of fat. Her current lifetime production surpasses 182,000 pounds of milk. Beaming, Eckstein said, "She's still a pretty good cow. She just might see the showing again."



This line-up of good udders were viewed at the Alvin and Diana Meyers farm where Canadian bulls have been used heavily. Shown here are daughters of Tempo, Telmatt and Astronaut.



District 3 Jersey Picnic Held

The District 3 Jersey breeders of the Pennsylvania Jersey Cattle Club were hosted by the Robert C. Dreisbach family at their Longmeadows Farm, Hamburg, for the annual breeders picnic last Saturday. The jetsnake machine, a covered dish meal, and a discussion of the 1987 PJCC annual meeting highlighted the informal gathering of area Jersey breeders. Breeders also discussed the newly formed young sire group, Liberty Jersey Sires, and the efforts to make available additional Jersey sires to breeders. After the meeting, "Wilderness" Jerseys were viewed at Longmeadows Farm and breeders enjoyed a relaxing day of fellowship.