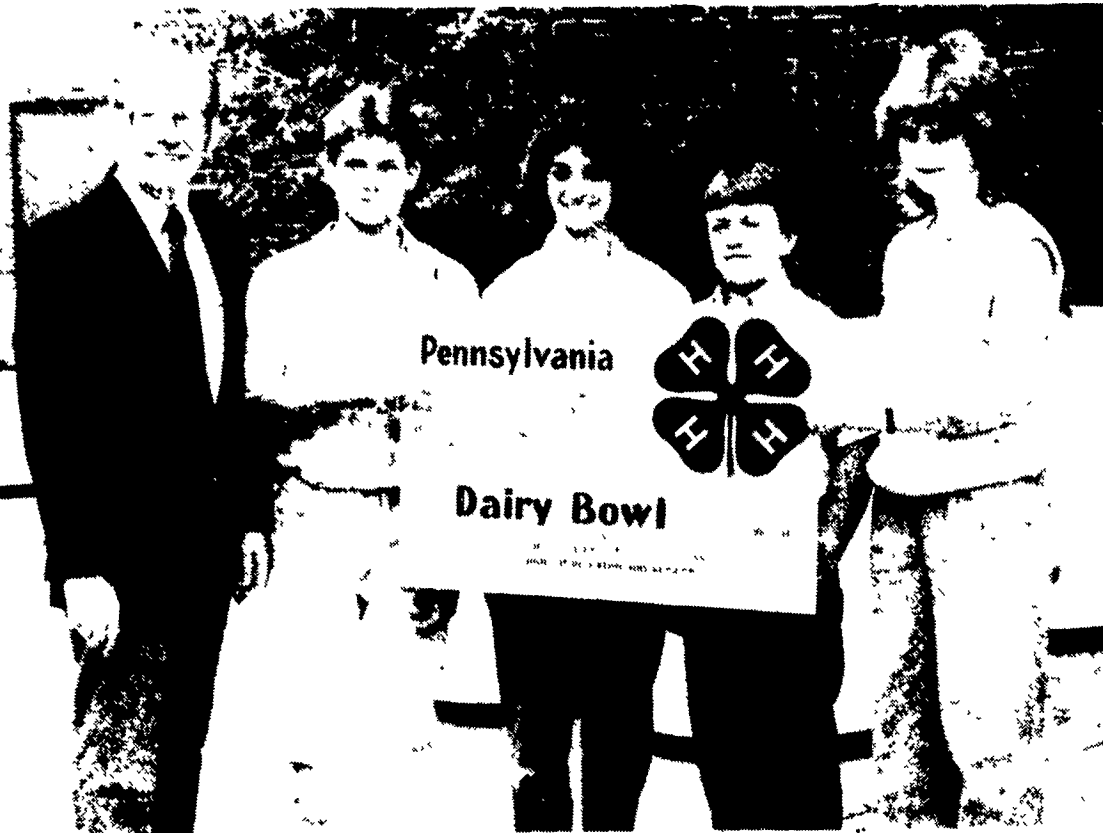


Preparation, Dedication Are Keys To Success For Lancaster Dairy Bowl Team



Members of the Lancaster dairy bowl team, which placed first at 4-H Achievement Days, receive congratulations from Dr. Alan Snider, assistant director for 4-H youth programs. Team members, from left, are Joe DeLong, Janice Garber, Tom McCauley and Angie Spickler.

BY SALLY BAIR

Lancaster Co. Correspondent

LANCASTER — What does it take to have a winning team in state 4-H competition? According to members of Lancaster County's first-place dairy bowl team, it requires long hours of preparation, some "intense" competition, and a dedication to getting the job done. It's also "a lot of fun."

Kim Stroud, director of communications for Federated Genetics who served as coach for the four-member team, says, "It was their dedication. I can't take credit for it. It was their hard work."

Stroud's part in the successful team was to get them together once a week since mid-April and have them work on learning the materials they needed to know. She credits Mike Pratt, 4-H summer assistant, with doing a "wonderful job" as assistant coach. "He had experience with the dairy bowl." Although she has coached the team for three years, Stroud has yet to see an actual contest.

She explained that contestants need to have a basic knowledge in all fields, but in addition to the basic dairy information they also need to be familiar with current issues in the dairy industry, like the dairy herd buyout program. "They read current dairy publications to get the latest facts. Many of the more standard questions are taken from the 4-H heifer and cow project books.

The team began practice in April with six 4-H'ers trying out for it. After regional competition, where they placed first, four members were selected to work for the state contest. Stroud says, "I always hoped they would do well because I knew they were good and were well prepared. But I didn't want to get their expectations up. We pointed out to them that they don't do it just to win. The experience you get and the people you meet are important. 4-H is supposed to be a program to help you meet kids from all over the state.

"We stressed that they were building their experiences and that it would give them another dimension. 4-H is a fabulous experience," she said.

In addition to the hard work, Stroud says the coaches tried to incorporate some fun into practice times. But, she acknowledged, "The kids have to be dedicated to

it. It is not all fun."

It was Angie Spickler's first trip to Penn State on a judging team and she said she tried out because it was "something different, and I thought I would meet some new people." Angie, 15, has been a member of the Ayrshire, Jersey and Brown Swiss 4-H Club for 7 years.

She said she was "really happy" with the outcome, but admitted, "A lot of things crossed your mind during the contest." They had some confidence, however, because, "We did a lot of studying, and overall we knew pretty much. We got most of it from the material they gave us and studied it on our own."

Angie owns 11 4-H animals and considered the trip to Penn State for the state contest "really neat." Now she's considering how she can get there next year, since team members are now ineligible to compete in the dairy bowl contest.

Joe DeLong, 17, had the distinction of being on a winning team two years in a row, having placed first in dairy judging last year at State Days, leading the local team which took the state title. It was because he was ineligible to judge in the dairy competition that he decided to try out for the dairy bowl team. He was thrilled with the second win, but says he prefers judging dairy cows. Expressing confidence in the preparation, he says, "I thought we'd do well." DeLong is a member of the Kids And Cows 4-H Club and owns three Holsteins in 4-H.

Fifteen-year-old Tom McCauley had participated in the junior dairy bowl team, but competition is only at the regional level. He said, "I thought we'd do pretty good. It was fun, but it was kind of tense."

He said they studied together about 10 times as a team, and

noted that the contest helps young people become more aware of facts about dairy animals and the dairy industry. "I think that's why they have dairy bowl," he remarked.

Like the other team members, Tom said he was excited about the win and is looking forward to national competition. He has two 4-H animals and has been a member of the 4-H Holstein Club for six years.

Despite the hard work, Janice Garber, 16, seems to sum up the feelings of the group when she says, "It was fun. It pays off in the end." A member of the 4-H Guernsey Club, Janice owns six animals and has been in 4-H for 7 years. She traveled to State Days two years ago with a winning demonstration, but said she much prefers judging.

She says, "It was the first year at State Days for all of us on the dairy bowl team and we had the attitude that whatever we get we will be happy with. We knew we had a good team." It was a special thrill to come out on top. Janice says the contest itself was fun, but adds, "It got real intense."

An added benefit was getting to know the other team members better. "We got along really well." She said each team member contributed by reading articles and coming up with 10 questions. "We just quizzed each other each week."

The team now gets to participate in national competition in Louisville, Ky. at the North American International Livestock Exposition in November, an experience they look forward to.

Stroud said she'd like to see an even bigger turnout for next year's dairy bowl team, saying, "It will give us more to choose from and make a better Lancaster County team."

Union/Snyder FmHA

Farmers in the Union/Snyder County area elected two new members to the County Committee of Farmers Home Administration recently. A third member of the committee was designated by FmHA's State Director, D. Elmer Hawbaker.

Mary Moyer, John Snyder, and Ray Hess, all of Union County, will hold their office for one, two and three years, respectively.

"I am looking forward to the

chance to work with a new committee that was nominated and elected by farmers in the area." Mildred Turner, County Supervisor stated.

Any farmer who resides in Union or Snyder County and can not receive credit elsewhere may contact the Lewisburg County FmHA Office for information on insured or guaranteed operating or real estate loans.

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