

PDCA Judging School Held In Franklin County

BY BONNIE BRECHBILL
Franklin Co. Correspondent
CHAMBERSBURG — "We're getting away from liking to see the pins higher than the hips," Richard Keene told the group of judging candidates at the Pennsylvania Purebred Dairy Cattle Association Judging School Wednesday.

Although some of the candidates had faulted a 3-year-old Holstein for having a slight slope from hooks to pins, Keene placed her first in her class. "On modern cows, we're looking for more of that," he explained.

Keene, this year's school official, has been judging dairy cattle

for 28 years. He has judged the Central National Holstein Show three times and the Brown Swiss National Show four times. He has 85 Holsteins on his farm in central New York.

Franklin County hosted the annual judging school July 14 and 15. The 68 participants judged four classes of Guernseys Tuesday at the Seth Schnedly farm in Cearfoss, Md., followed by four classes of Holsteins at the Jim Burdette farm, Mercersburg. Wednesday they judged Jerseys at the Lester Martin farm, Chambersburg, and Holsteins at the farm of Harold Crider, Chambersburg.

After the candidates had judged a class, the cards with their placings were collected and evaluated. Two or three who had placed the animals similarly to how Keene had placed them were called upon to explain their placings to the group.

"We've had some tremendous classes," Keene stated. "No one ever gets the placings exactly alike, but the candidates are doing well." In several of the classes the placings were so close that Keene said he could not argue if the candidates chose to rate the animals slightly differently than he had.

Lori Sollenberger of Everett,

Bedford County, attended the judging school to prepare for two judging assignments this summer, the Lebanon County Fair and a district show. She was called on to explain her placings in the 3-year-old Holstein class at Harold Crider's.

The 68 participants included 57 people who hoped to become approved judges of the Pennsylvania Purebred Dairy Cattle Association. Most had judged 4-H, FFA and county fairs previous to attending the school. Also in attendance were 11 students from Penn State University and Delaware Valley College.

According to Kenneth I. Raney, secretary/treasurer of the PDCA, the judging school included Jerseys, Guernseys and Holsteins because judges at county fairs are often required to judge all three. Some county fairs also include Milking Shorthorn and Brown Swiss, so judges must be familiar with all five breeds.

Keene explained that judges

look for "pretty much the same prime things" in the different breeds, although he acknowledged that Holstein and Brown Swiss cows have more foot and leg problems because of their size. "We see consistently better udders in Jerseys," he added.

While several candidates expressed their displeasure with the closely spaced back teats on an aged Holstein, Keene placed her above the middle of her class. "I'm not bothered by those close together teats," he explained. "I can pull them apart to get the milking machine on. It's the ones that are out on the corners that are difficult. When they're full of milk, it's hard to get the milker on, and then it falls off."

Raney expressed appreciation to the host farmers, to area farmers who brought in cows for the classes, and to the Franklin County youth who led the animals. "Franklin County has done a good job of hosting the judging school," he said.



Richard Keene, official judge for the PDCA judging school, explains his class placings to the school participants at Harold Crider's farm.



Keene makes a point about judging at Lester Martin's farm.

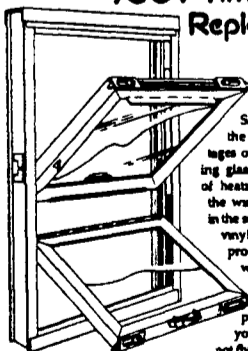
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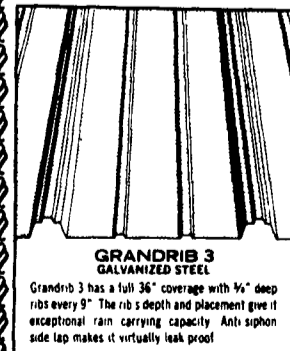
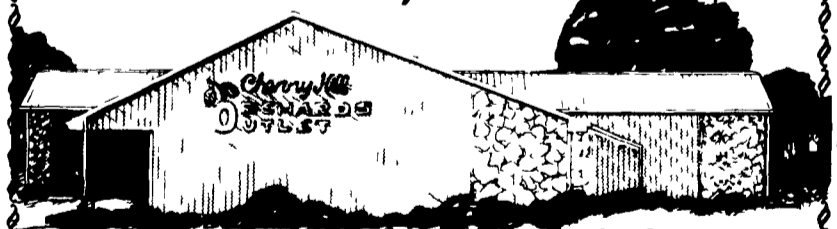
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