

Born And Bred To Show Baby Beef

BY LISA RISSE

LITITZ — "I guess it's been bred into me," said Angie Longenecker. "Daddy and Grandpa showed beef cattle. It was something I got interested in and got to enjoy because of them."

The 16-year-old daughter of Jackie and Barry Longenecker has been showing baby beef for six years and next week will be the fifth time she has exhibited at Farm Show. She has won many trophies including one for showing the top steer in its class in last year's Farm Show competition.

Angie's father noticed her interest in steers as she worked with a family friend's son on his show animals. But Barry and Jackie waited to start Angie in steer exhibiting until she was 10 because of her small size. She joined the Lancaster County Red Rose Baby Beef Club and now also is a freshman member of the Manheim Central FFA chapter.

Masa is the 1265-pound steer that Angie will take to Farm Show. She's had him for about a year and already has won awards with him: the Manheim Fair Baby Beef Show and the showmanship contest at the Lancaster County Baby Beef Round-up for which she received money to purchase a second steer, Justin.

When Angie first got Masa she spend about an hour every day working with the steer. "It takes that long to get the animal tame, halter broke, and ready to show," Angie explained. "If they're not tame and ready to show, they'll not do as well in shows."

Angie tries to tame her steers as



Among the awards Angie has won are several showmanship trophies and grand and reserve championships.

quickly as possible. To do this, she handles them, leads them once they're halter broken, combs and brushes them, and using the cattle stick, scratches their bellies and sets their legs. "It usually takes

three to four months for the steers to become tame," Angie said. "Of course, the amount of time required depends on the animal."

Now that Farm Show time is here, Masa is about as tame as he'll get, according to Angie. She concentrates mostly on working with him using the stick and in gradually clipping and shaving him for show-ready appearance.

The time spent with an animal not only helps the steer to win, but also helps the shower to win. Besides winning the showmanship competition at the baby beef roundup, Angie has won it at local fairs.

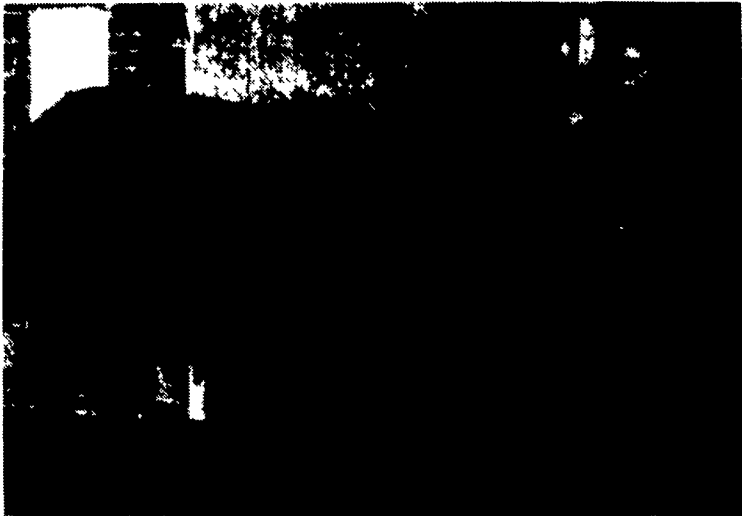
Being a 4-H'er and FFA member has taught Angie many things. "I think working with the animals is the main part (of the clubs). You can get to know what animals are really like, and it shows how much work it takes to care for an animal. Steers aren't a project that you just spend five minutes a day on."

Angie feels that she also has learned sportsmanship and confidence. "It teaches you winning and losing; that you can't always win and if you win—good—but if you don't, just take a good attitude about it and maybe you'll do better next time."

Not too long ago, Angie had an opportunity to demonstrate how well she's learned that lesson. "Last year a lot of people thought I'd do well in Farm Show. I had a steer that had won championships at other shows. But it only won first in its class, and I felt I let people down by not having done better than what I did."

Club members encouraged Angie when her spirits flagged. "They told me that maybe next year I'd go on (to grand championship)".

Thursday will be Angie and Masa's day of reckoning. A lot of fingers will be crossed hoping for a grand champion steer blue ribbon.



Angie Longenecker and her year-and-a-half old steer, Masa, will be competing at Farm Show.



Angie tames her steers by handling them frequently and combing them. Here she combs Justin, her newest steer.

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