

# The Milk Tank That Overflowed

**BY LOU ANN GOOD**  
**HESSDALE** — Disease outbreaks among herds bring fear to every farmer's heart. In fact, a study of agricultural stresses lists an outbreak of disease as the second highest stress-producing problem that farmers face.

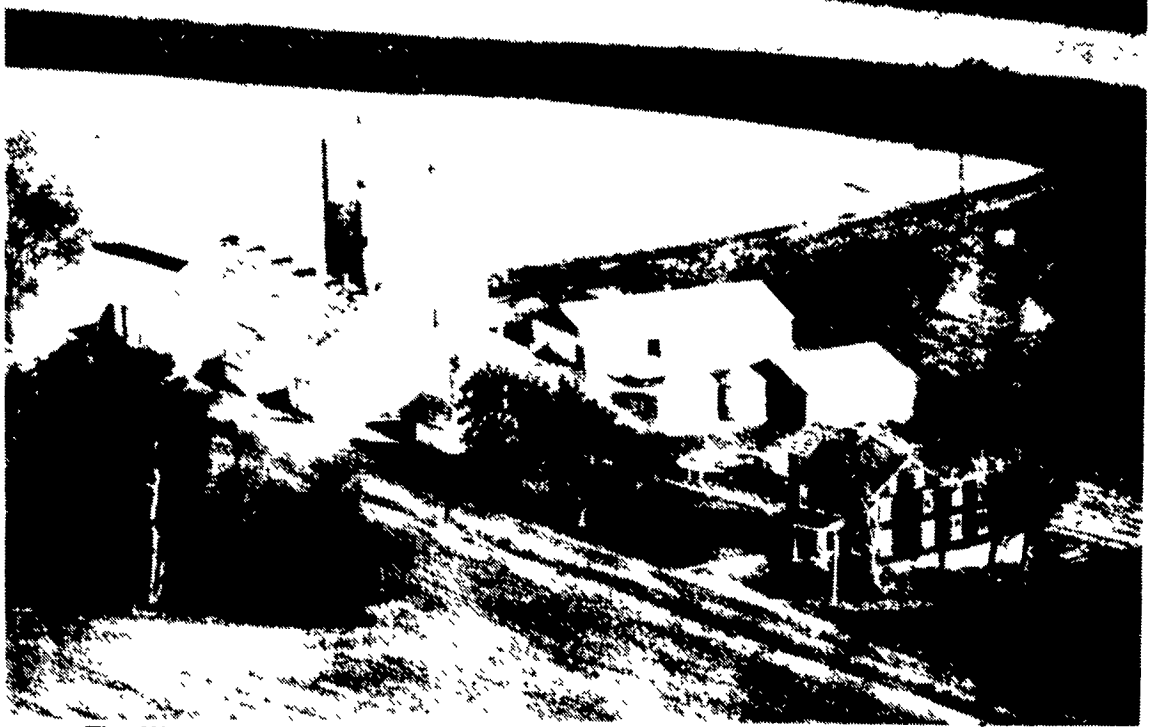
Last spring, Leroy and Nora Weaver, dairy farmers in Hessdale, were distressed when a virus ran rampant through their herd of 53 Holsteins. In addition to administering shots to the cows, the Weavers took an extra step. They prayed.

Leroy explained that they believe all that they have belongs to God and that He knows their needs. So when their veterinarian

diagnosed their herd as having a virus that could be fatal, the Weavers felt it was only natural to pray for their cows to be healed.

For three days, the cows were given shots, but their fever, coughing, and runny noses continued. The little bit of milk the herd produced needed to be discarded since it contained a high level of antibodies. For two weeks, the Weavers lost 1,000 pounds of milk daily.

Despite the low milk output, the Weavers continued to milk their herd. Leroy said, "They're going to get better." On the third week, Nora paused when she went to attach the milkers to their prized cow that had given more than 100 pounds daily before contracting



The Weaver's 280-acre farm is used mostly to raise corn, hay and wheat for their 53 Holsteins and 37 heifers.

the virus. She said to her husband, "I don't think it's worth trying, she doesn't give anything anyway."

Leroy was adamant. "Milk her. It's going to turn around."

The turn around was even more than Leroy could imagine possible. That week, their total production doubled from the original amount that the herd had given before their sickness. In fact, the Weaver's milk tank overflowed. Instead of the milk truck driver picking up their milk every other day, he needed to come every day for two months to pick up their daily 2,000 pounds of milk.

Both Leroy and his wife maintain, "It's a miracle."



Milking is Nora's job, feeding is Leroy's responsibility and their son Gary takes care of giving corn and hay to their 53 Holsteins and 37 heifers.

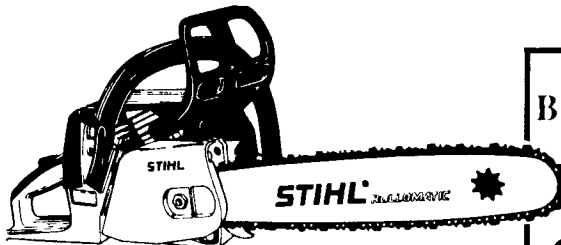


Since Brenda, 19, got a fulltime job, she seldom has time to help with the farm chores.

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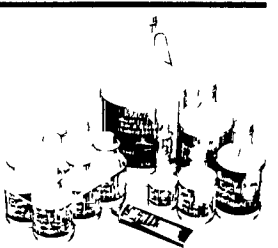
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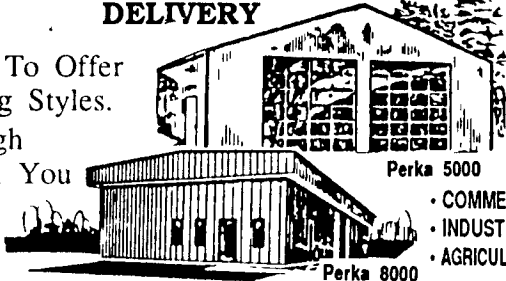
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