



Faith's favorite: SRF Duke of York 11W by SBF Royal Gypsy King out of SBF Royal Red Rose was entered in the Polled Hereford competition at the state farm show.

## From City Gal To President Of Polled Hereford Association

BY LOU ANN GOOD

**ABBOTTSTOWN (Adams)** — For a city gal, Faith Peterson has plowed a long furrow—straight to the top of the Polled Hereford Association.

Elected as president of the state association, Faith plans to lend a woman's perspective to the predominately male dominated position.

"When my husband and I bought a farm in 1973," Faith admits, "I didn't know the difference between hay and straw. The closest I came to farming was mowing grass."

Neither did she know about cattle breeding nor showing cattle, but experience was a fast teacher.

She said, "My husband, Craig, who is an engineer, and I always loved nature and the outdoors. When we bought the farm, a neighbor recommended buying beef cattle since they could be maintained on a parttime basis."

On his advice, the Petersons purchased 14 Polled Herefords.

Immediately she fell in love with the gentle dispositioned brown and white cattle. Enthusiastically Faith reports that Polled Herefords are noted for being easy to handle, for their calving ease, good mothering abilities, and for being economical to feed and maintain and producing excellent meat. But the most desirable is their highly heritable trait of being born without horns. She shakes her head, "Why anyone would want to go through the mess of dehorning cows is hard to understand. Polled Herefords eliminate the need to horn calves. It's so much easier to dehorn naturally."

Like other breeds, Faith said, "You get what you pay for in pedigree and characteristics."

Today, the Petersons have built a reputable herd and started an embryo transfer venture. They're pros who show nationally and are well versed in successful beef breeding.

But in those early years of farming, the Petersons received valuable information by attending beef and Polled Hereford meetings. "Everyone is so helpful and willing to share their knowledge," Faith said. "It seems that farmers—or anyone associated with agriculture—are special people. We received a lot of education



Newly elected president of the Polled Hereford Association, Faith Peterson, offers a woman's perspective to the male dominated position.

and rewarding friendships through the Hereford and other agricultural associations."

Now Faith considers it an honor to head the organization that was instrumental in teaching her husband and her how to make a profit raising beef cattle.

In the Peterson's beginning years of farming, their three sons showed cattle in 4-H and other local, state and national competition. Now, the sons are grown and on their own, but the parents continue the family hobby by showing cattle.

In addition to their own prized herd, the Petersons also own one sixth an interest in a cow, SBF Royal Gypsy and one eighth interest in a bull that is bred and raised at nearby Fairfield Spring Manor Farms.

Faith said, "It's been exciting to form a partnership interest with others. We have a one-fourth interest in SBF Royal Red Rose. Her first two calves were shown at national competition plus other major shows. She calved recently and will be flushed in May."

It's been a learning experience for the Petersons as they applied and received an AI permit for their bull, SRF (Spring Run Farm) Duke of York 11 W for selling semen and certificates.

The purpose of the Polled Hereford Association is to promote the breed and to support the beef industry in Pennsylvania. Empha-

sis and activity vary from year to year depending on board members' interests. And, now that Faith is president, she plans to stimulate interest in an educational meeting for the fall. "The format for computerized records listing traits and summaries on cows and bulls recently changed," she said. "I'd like to have a representative from the APHA explain it so that breeders can become versed in what the figures mean. It's a tremendous tool for breeders if they can utilize it."

In the past, the Polled Hereford organization tended to be loosely affiliated with the Pollettes (a women's group that raises funds for the Polled Hereford queen association). Faith hopes to change that.

She said, "I'd like to see the organizations work together since each exist for the same reason." She believes the Pollettes should get more recognition and support. This viewpoint offers a women's perspective and she anticipates support for the effort.

Cautiously, she explains, "Women are often better networkers than men." She hastens to add that doesn't mean men don't do a good job at leadership. Perhaps we just have more time."

Directors meet three to four times annually to plan educational meetings and shows for the 80 members.

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