



Honored by the Kutztown Jaycees as the outstanding farmer under forty, Floyd discusses the farm operation with his wife Beth.

Proud To Be A Farmer

BY LOU ANN GOOD FLEETWOOD (Berks) — Breeder, vet, farm owner, mechanic, business manager are a few titles that describe Floyd Kurtz. The Fleetwood farmer recently was named the outstanding farmer under 40 by the Kutztown Jaycees.

Not only does the local community think Floyd is a great farmer, his wife, Beth, agrees. "He is a good farmer," she says. "I'm proud of him. He is such a hard worker and doesn't give himself enough credit for all he does."

It takes a lot of hard work to keep their 110-acre Fleetwood farm in good shape. Kurtz farms a total of 280 acres with alfalfa, soy-

beans, wheat, oats, and barley.

He sells some and the remainder goes to feed his 61-head registered Holsteins and their replacement stock. He has a rolling herd average of 18,000 pounds.

While some farmers complain of milk prices, Floyd believes "it's decent."

But like most farmers, Floyd maintains that costs must be watched. He credits his ability to making farming profitable to buying equipment at sales and to being able to do most of the vet work on his herd.

"You got to save where you can," he insists. "Farm sales are the only way I buy equipment. I let the

rich guys who farm for a hobby buy the new stuff then when it's a few years old, I buy it."

Equipment repairs do not faze him because he enjoys working on machinery as long as it doesn't break down during planting or harvesting.

Saving where you can includes putting the herd on pasture whenever weather permits. This year the herd was out until December and then put out again in March. "It strengthens the cows' legs. I don't have near the problem with weak legs," Floyd said.

Floyd grew up on a Fleetwood farm as one of 10 brothers, who he boasts, each had one sister. (For those who are puzzled, there was only one sister among the 10 brothers).

He never seriously considered doing anything other than farming and he says, "Even if I wanted to, my wife wouldn't let me."

Beth confirms his statement. She considers her life and her children's life enjoyable by having husband and father nearby. She explained, "He gets to do more stuff with the kids like playing ball and riding bike. Their children include Joshua, 9; Abby, 7; and Rebecca, 16 months.

Beth didn't grow up on a farm. The closest she came to farm life was when she was about 10. Then, a neighbor affiliated with New Holland machinery rounded up the neighborhood kids for an advertisement picture touting the goodness of a Model 450 mower. She still has the picture.

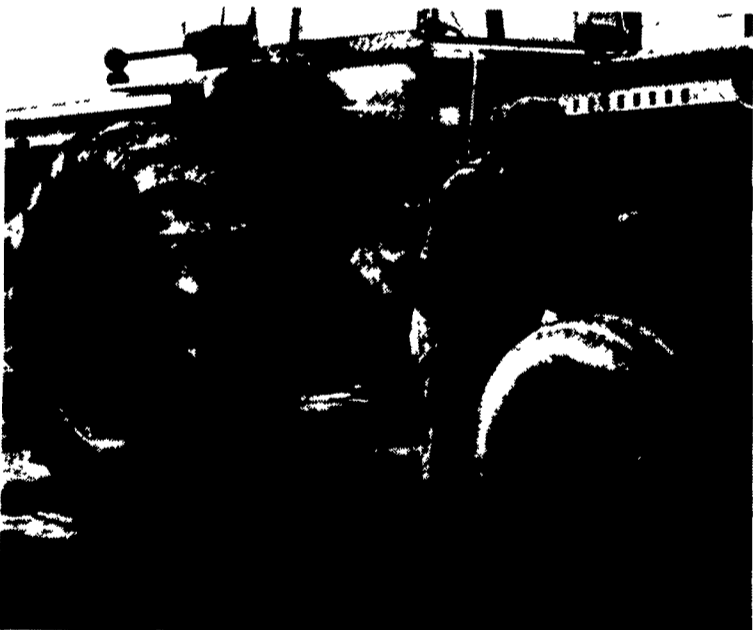
According to Floyd, the Kurtz's have the philosophy that "Beth can run the house and I'll run the barn."

Although Beth does not take an active role in farming duties, she considers her supporter role of equal importance.

She said, "I think it's important for a wife to encourage and support her husband. He works so hard. Some days I get upset that he works so long, but I'm thankful he is working hard and enjoys it and not sitting around being lazy."

Beth prefers to accompany Floyd to farm sales, where he finds farm equipment bargains and she searches for collectibles. She's thrilled to find agate ware and other collectibles stuck in a box of junk.

In addition to collecting baskets, dolls; milk bottles, buckets and memorabilia, which add a warm



Fleetwood farmer Floyd Kurtz enjoys repairing equipment as long as it isn't during planting or harvesting season. "You got to save where you can," he says.



The Kurtz's believe that it is Beth's job to take care of the house and Floyd's to take care of the barn. She enjoys decorating their farmhouse with antiques and collectibles. Here she arranges one of her 30 dolls in an antique high chair.

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