

Good Stewards

(Continued from Page C2)

lactation, 24,000m for animals in third lactation and 29,000m for animals in fourth lactation.

Part of the credit for the herd's production goes to the animals' genetic base. "We are trying to breed a solid type animal. We still use the indexes, but I feel that some breeders are using them too specifically instead of trying to breed a good solid cow that is going to last. Some farmers are concerned only with the first lactation since that's the most important one for the records. They can make more money selling embryos than selling milk. We want to breed good all around animals," Ray said.

The farm is using embryo transplant as one means of improving the herd's pedigree.

"We've been using E.T. for two years with a few of our top animals. The embryos from the very best cows are put in recipients at the low end of the herd. Often these animals are still productive but they just don't have the pedi-

grees of our upper level cows," Ray explained.

Walking down the spotless stall barn observing recipients with bright yellow ear tags evidences how successful the program has been. While it's no surprise that the donor animals are pleasing to the eye, even the recipients would be welcome on many farms. Still Ray doesn't feel that E.T. is for everyone.

"You need genetically superior cows. You just can't play catch up with genetics. You can learn to manage to the maximum, then you can only improve production through genetics and the more you improve the slower the improvements go. That's where E.T. has been a big benefit. But it doesn't make sense on a lot of farms. For example, a farmer with a RHA of 15,000m may have a cow producing 25,000 pounds and he thinks 'Gee I should flush that animal.'

"Unfortunately, by the time you get a calf through E.T. you can easily have several thousand dollars in the animal. So if the genetic index isn't high enough it makes a

lot more sense for farmers to put their money into buying a top notch calf," Ray stated.

It also takes more than a little management.

"You do have to put in more effort. It's more book work, more attention to detail and you need to get pictures taken," said Ray.

Promote Protein

Junge Farms does purchase genetically superior animals to augment their breeding program. "We recently purchased a daughter of the number one cow for protein in the state. We've been trying to breed for protein for the last 10 years. It's a difficult thing to improve, but we think it's the way of the future.

"Foreign markets are already interested in it. I can see butterfat fading in importance. Actually I think we are marketing milk all wrong.

"We should tell those ad agencies to change the size of milk containers from gallons to two liters like the soda bottles and we should label milk as high protein. After all consumers are interested in protein and worried about fat. Yet, we sell milk based on the fat content and nowhere does it tell consumers that milk is 3.1-3.2% protein," said Ray.

The Moyers also see to it that Junge animals are merchandised.

"We don't show our animals, but we do take pictures and advertise. We consign animals to the Sire Power sale, the state sale and a number of local yearly sales. We've also had a number of bulls go to the A.I. services. We started in 1972 and by the late 70s we had five animals under contract. Right now there are three bulls under contract and another eight to ten we've sold for commercial use."

Bulls that don't make the grade are fed out for beef.

Winning The Leukosis Fight

It was the bull business that turned up the problem so few dairymen are willing to discuss...leukosis.

"We were preparing to export one of our bulls overseas when we found out he had leukosis. We had the herd tested and found out we had 33 animals with the disease," said Ray.

That was five years ago. The family and hired help went on a strict program to eradicate the disease.

"We culled several animals immediately. We now use sterile syringes, separate needles for each animal, separate gloves and we soak our tattooers.

"Today we have only seven ani-



Ray is quite pleased with one of his most recent purchases, Creation. Her dam was a 41,000-pound producer and the number one protein cow in the state. Note the bar openings on the calf pens. Ray and his father, a welder, have been adding bars to improve ventilation for the animals.

mals left in the herd. None show the clinical signs of the disease. We've only had two of our own heifers test positive and they were both from positive dams. Only about five percent of positive cows transfer the disease to their offspring through the placenta. We figure we will be rid of the disease in five years. The animals that are left are top performers and it just isn't economically feasible to cull them right now," Ray said.

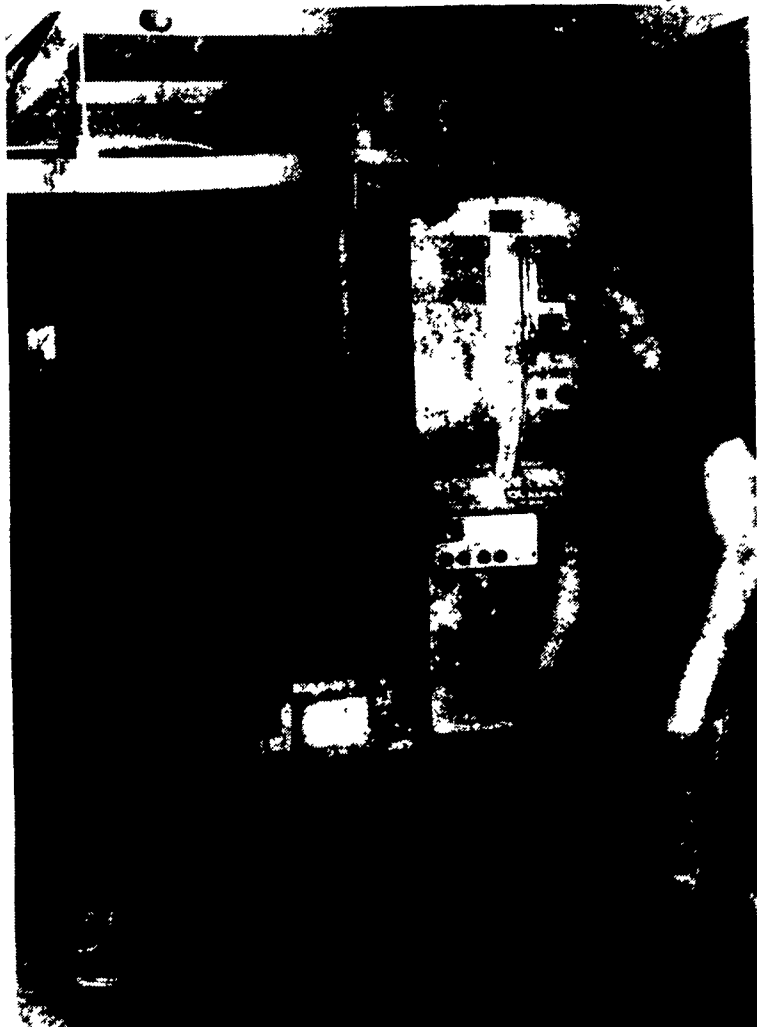
Among the animals that the Moyers are left to sell is Junge Chairman Pixie. Pixie is a four-year-old and was the third cow in the state for butterfat. Pixie, a VG-87, made 32,800 pounds of

milk and 1608 pounds of butterfat and is now 4 years and 10 months. Her daughter, Junge Nedboy Penny made 1050 pounds of butterfat as a two-year-old and has a +202 predicted difference value."

It's also had to detect leukosis in animals that are brought into the herd.

"Leukosis is on almost every farm, but few farmers realize it. We only bring disease tested animals into the herd, but before six months of age it's hard to determine if the animals have the leukosis. They can test negative, but it's hard to be sure that test is going to stay that way," Ray said.

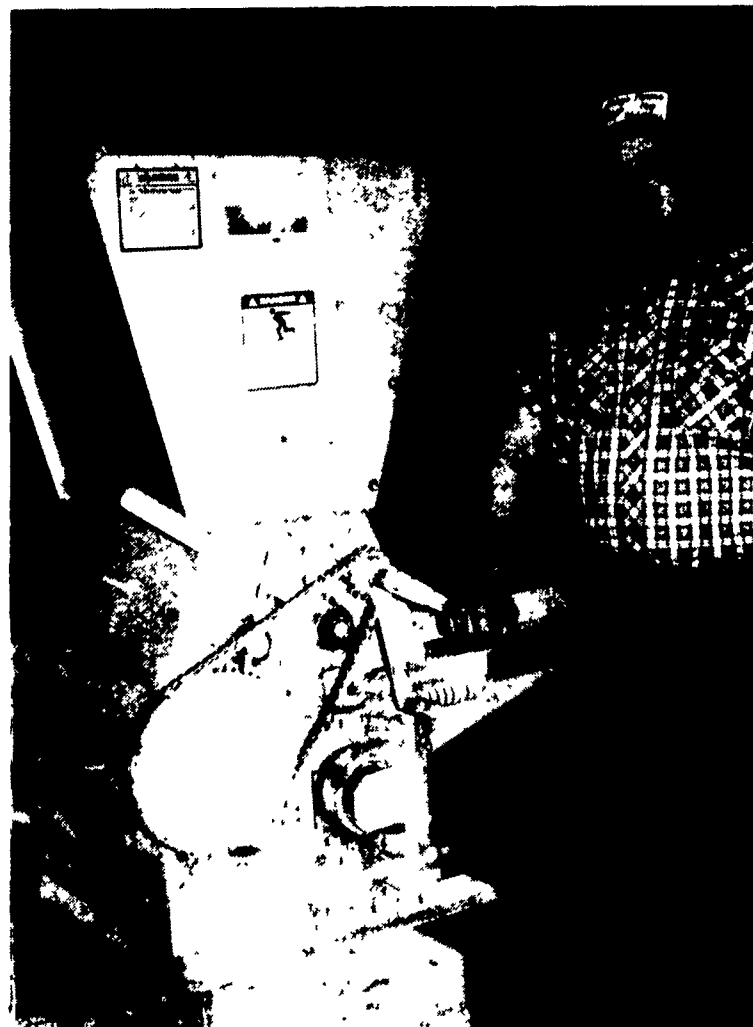
(Turn to Page C4)



This is "Alf" the Alfa-Delavel feeding system recently installed in the main barn. The system automatically feeds the animals their individual rations nine times a day.



Junge Chairman Pixie, held by Jay Garls, the farm's herdsman, was the number three cow in the state for butterfat as a four-year-old.



Nutritionists discouraged the Moyers from buying a roller mill for the corn. Ray found a salesman willing to let them try the machine on a risk-free basis. Almost immediately they had a three-pound increase in milk production and a pound increase in butterfat.