

Meet The Family

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Mase family's interest when Gary's sister Grace began showing for 4-H.

When Gary started showing for 4-H in 1969, he followed his sister's footsteps.

"My friends used to kid me and accuse me of showing Swiss because I had no competition in the county so I could always win. But I really liked the Swiss breed better. They're more docile and queenly and have longevity. A three- or four-year-old Swiss can milk as good as any Holstein and you get increased butterfat."

The export market is big for

Swiss. "If you have something decent and they want it, they'll pay good prices," Gary said.

In reflection Gary admits, "maybe I liked Swiss just because I wanted to be different from my friends. I like being different in a lot of things."

One of the things for which he gets the most razing for being different is his unusual milking schedule. He milks at 12 p.m. and at 12 a.m.

"Hey, he said. "I tried for years to conform to the regular schedule. But all the evening activities come over milking time so we changed it."

"Now we can go to games (Gary

plays baseball and his seven-year-old son plays baseball and softball) and to family gatherings and we don't need to worry about milking cows. We stay out late and when we come home, we milk the cows. The next morning we can sleep in."

The milking schedule worked better for the Mases before they had school age children. Now Patty needs to get their seven-year-old ready for school. But, she said, "Since school started this year, I've been lucky. My husband only asked me to help with milking two times."

The hours work out well for Gary who claims to be a night person. "It might not work for everyone, but it works best for us," Gary said. "Now I can play baseball and not worry about getting there late."

The Mase family loves the togetherness that farm life brings. The parents enthusiasm for farming has been spreading to their children.

Five-year-old Alicia was crowned the Li'l Miss Lebanon County Dairy Princess and helps promote dairy products at public functions.

Garrett, 9; placed first in 4-H district competition. Then his calf got sick and although it recovered they decided not to expose it to other illnesses at state competition.

Two-year-old Tony follows Gary everywhere on the farm. He even tags along for the midnight milking. About 30 minutes later, Patti goes to the barn and finds him curled up in a wheelbarrow.

Last month's herd average for the Mase's Brown Swiss was 18,597 pounds with 731 of butter-

fat and 659- of protein.

Their Holstein average is 21,000 pounds with 750 butterfat and 673 protein.

Gary said he breeds his cows for improved cow type, not numbers. "If you improve the type, you increase your production as well. I had a cow with high numbers that an association wanted to contract, but I refused. I'd like to sell a bull for money, but if I can't guarantee it, I don't want to sell it."

"I'd like to get a 20,000 pound herd average, a few more big milk records. I dream of one of my cows being named All American or of being bred to an All American," Gary said.

Although setting records with his Brown Swiss has brought Gary much satisfaction, he said, "I'd like to see the Holsteins open their registration books. I got some awfully good Holsteins, too."

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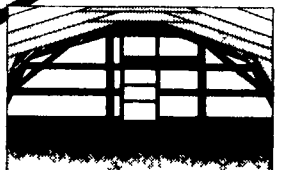
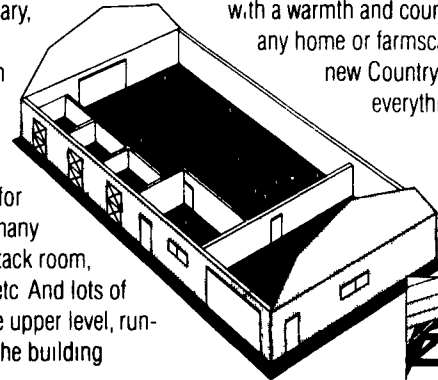
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