

Windermere Farms: Home Of Prize-Winning Percherons, Clydesdales

BY MARIANNE WALKER
Centre Co. Correspondent

SPRING MILLS (Centre Co.) — "I can't help it; it's in my blood," he admitted, shaking his head. "I was born this way—I just can't help it," he repeated as he gazed out over the pasture, filled with about 20 Percheron and Clydesdale mares. Abe Allebach was speaking of his love, or maybe it should be referred to as his passion for horses. This small-framed man with an unending enthusiasm for equines has spent most of his life milking cows; always, always, with the idea of making a living with horses in the back of his mind. Over the years, Abe experimented with a variety of breeds, including Saddlebreds, Tennessee Walking Horses, and Standardbreds.

In 1972 the Allebachs invested in their first draft horses, a pair of Percheron brood mares, and the rest is as they say, history. "We basically got the two mares thinking we would use them in parades—that was Abe's thinking," remembers Mary, Abe's wife. "We decided that was foolish. We might as well be making some money with them," she added.

The show circuit was a must for the Allebachs, back in the early '70s. If they were going to promote their stock, if they hoped to make any money in this horse business. So, they "took to the show trail," selecting the very best of shows: the Sterling North American Championship Show in Detroit; the Ohio State Fair's National Show in Columbus; The Keystone International Livestock Exposition in Harrisburg; the Detroit International; the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto; and, of course, the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg.

"These shows are the toughest competitions in the United States and Canada," said Abe. Six years ago the Allebachs added Clydesdales to their showstring. And, what a showstring they've amassed. Take Black Home Duke, for instance. That's Abe's 18-hand stallion who has won at almost every major show in the United States and Canada, including the Royal Winter Fair. Duke serviced a total of 60 mares in the past year, with semen being sent to 16 states.

Abe recently sold Ambassador's Danny Boy, a stallion the family had campaigned for many years, during which time he had earned grand champion honors at the Eastern Regional Show four years in a row, and many championships at Farm Show. "It was important that after my stallion did what he did, that I sell him and start showing his offspring," Abe said.

This year, the Allebachs will be showing 14 of their 35 draft horses at Farm Show, hoping for the success they've had in years past. That success amounts to 29 grand championships and 19 reserves that the Allebachs have collected over the past 12 years at Harrisburg.

Abe is quick to point out that these honors have been won by the family: this is a family effort, for sure. Abe and Mary's son, Gerald, a sales manager at a local car dealership, own many of the horses in partnership. Together, Abe and Gerald are the showmen, with daughter, Monica, assisting as the whip person.

"Mary's work is behind the scenes," Abe explained, "but it's very important." With 14 horses to be bathed once, and sometimes twice, at Farm Show, her grooming duties are indeed important. Each of the horses must then be braided for competition.

Although the Allebach family as a unit contributes to the success of their draft horses, it appears to be Abe's knowledge and drive that has been the main impetus behind their prize-winning stock.

Allebach has an eye for correct conformation, and there are key elements he searches for in selection of his breeding stock. "You've heard the saying 'no foot—no horse,' that's the first thing I look for—a wide heel," Abe stated. "Then, I look for good slopey pasterns, well-formed hocks that are placed close together, and I like a flat-boned horse." He went on, "Those things have to be right. I look at other things later. If those things are right, they'll move right."

PA Dairymen's Association

NEW CUMBERLAND (Dauphin Co.) — The annual meeting and banquet of the Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association will be held Tuesday evening, Jan. 9 at the Harrisburg Sheraton-East.

The events of the evening will begin with a milk-punch reception at 6 p.m. with dinner to follow at 6:30 p.m.

Several highlights of the evening will include the awarding of the Charles E. Cowan Award and the Extension Service Award to two individuals involved in the dairy industry.

The evening will also feature the winning state 4-H Dairy Judging Team, which represented the United States in international competition this past summer, sharing their experiences, on the team as well as experiences while representing Pennsylvania and the United States.

Tickets cost \$13 each and are available by calling Sue Beshore at (717) 938-4876. Deadline for tickets is Monday, January 8.

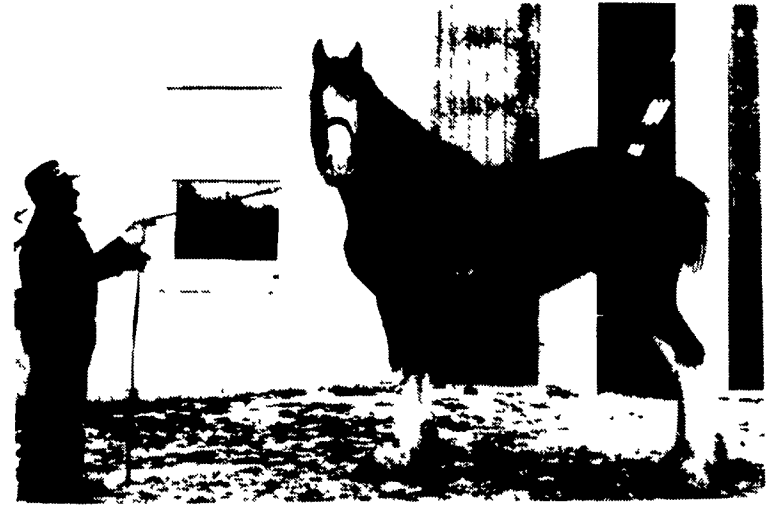
judged at the walk and the trot, so the movement that Abe speaks of is crucial. The Allebachs also compete in hitching classes of one horse, team, unicorn (a team with one horse in front), four, six, and, occasionally, eight horse. The hitching classes necessitate elaborate carts and patent leather harnesses that may cost as much as \$6,800 for a team.

Such equipment might seem extravagant, but one of the judging criteria is overall appearance, and when there are as many as 400 Percherons entered in a given show, the Allebachs believe that they must be competitive.

Part of staying competitive is advertising your product, which the Allebachs certainly do. They buy space in the "Draft Horse Journal," and Abe is a director of the National Percheron Association and the Pennsylvania Percheron Association. "Most of the advertising is your reputation, though," Abe admitted. Once people get to know that you have good horses, then you'll have buyers."

Three years ago Abe sold his cows, finally realizing his life-long dream of a career in horses. He now crop farms his 200-plus acres and cares for the horses, including their training and all farrier work. And, if you have the chance to observe him at Windermere Farms on a blustery 0 degree day, calmly but firmly leading Duke, the 18-hand, 2,000-pound stallion, you

know that this man was meant for a career in horses. Duke never thought of misbehaving; he was chock-full of zip as horses are in such weather, but he never thought of disobeying Abe. Suddenly it all makes sense: Abe was born this way—he just can't help it.

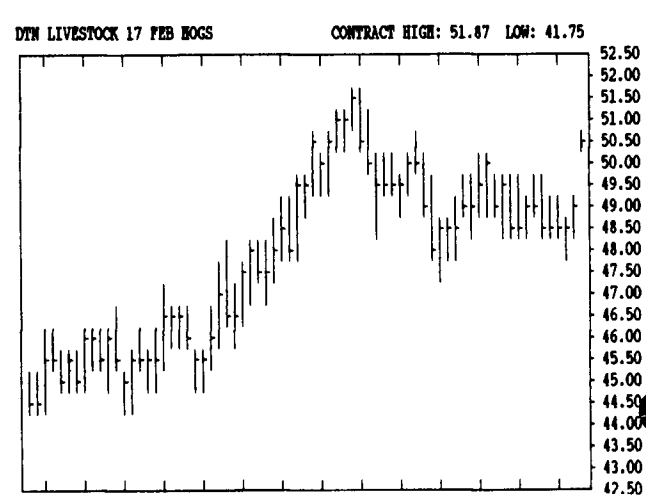
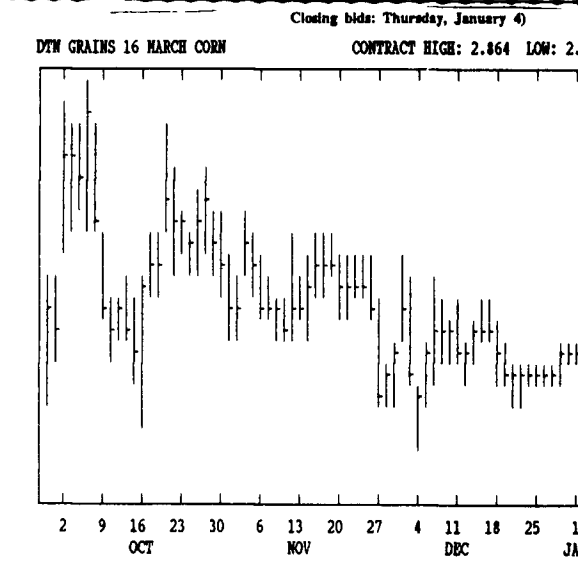


This two-year-old Clydesdale mare, Crystal, is one of 14 Windermere Farms draft horses that will be shown at Farm Show this year.

GRAIN, CATTLE AND HOG FUTURES MARKETS

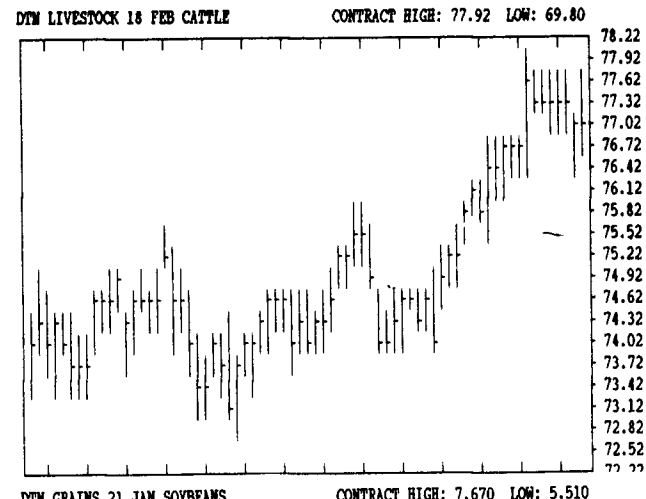
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LIVE CATTLE				FEEDER CATTLE				LIVE HOGS					
DATE	HIGH	LOW	LAST CHG	DATE	HIGH	LOW	LAST CHG	DATE	HIGH	LOW	LAST CHG		
FEB	7770	7665	7695*	-20	JAN	8535	8425	8455*	+8	FEB	5050	5050	5050*+150
APR	7600	7510	7540*	+5	MAR	8370	8270	8312*	+35	APR	4722	4722	4722*+150
JUN	7240	7180	7190*	+25	APR	8300	8182	8217*	+22	JUN	5045	5045	5045*+150
AUG	7207	7142	7142*	+37	MAY	8195	8110	8120*	+15	JULY	5080	5080	5080*+150
OCT	7207	7140	7147*	+40	AUG	8105	8065	8075*	+10	AUG	4922	4922	4922*+150
DEC	7315	7250	7250*	+35	SEP	8025	8022	8022*	+20	OCT	4507	4507	4507*+150

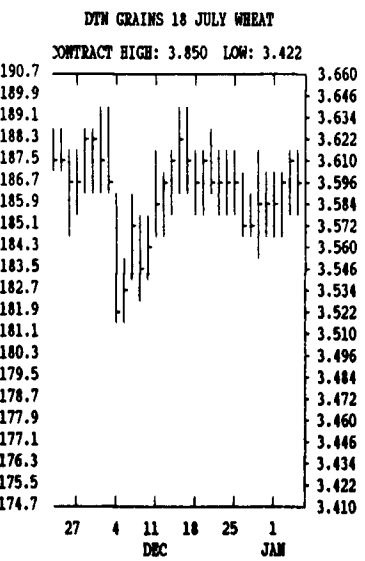
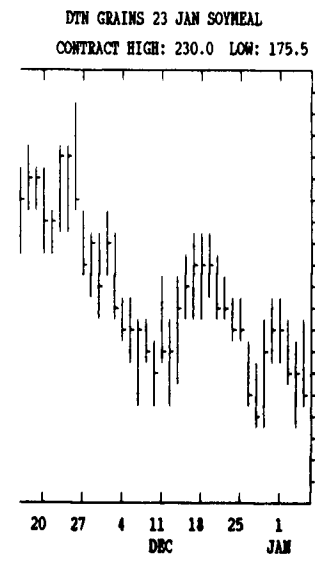
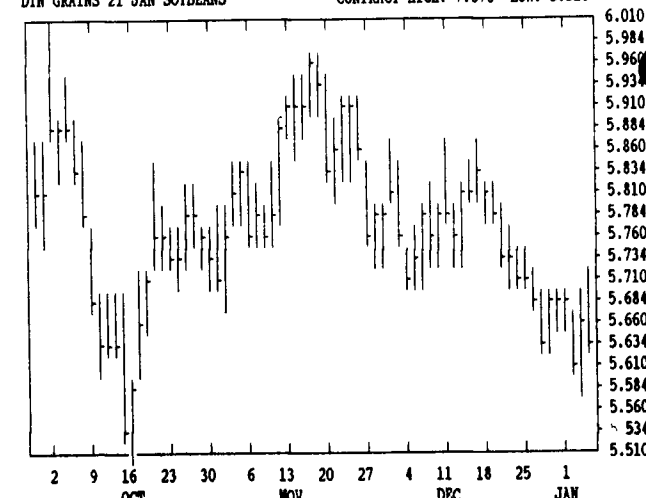


DTM FUTURES 10 01/04 TECHNICAL COMMENTS

	CLOSE	MOVING AVERAGES			PAST WEEK'S (ENDING 12/29)		CURRENT		
		4-DAY	9-DAY	18-DAY	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	SUPPORT	RESISTANCE
MAR WHEAT	4.09 1/4	4.09 1/4	4.09 5/8	4.11 3/8	4.11 1/2	4.05 1/2	4.09 1/4	4.02	4.20
JULY WHEAT	3.60 1/2	3.59 7/8	3.59 1/4	3.59 5/8	3.61	3.56 1/4	3.58 1/2	3.47	3.65
KC MAR WHT	4.07	4.07 5/8	4.08 3/8	4.08 7/8	4.10 1/4	4.06 1/2	4.08 1/2	4.00	4.15
KC JULY WHT	3.69 1/2	3.68 7/8	3.68 5/8	3.68 1/2	3.69 1/2	3.67	3.68 3/4	3.44 1/2	3.75



SOYBEANS			SOYBEAN MEAL			SOYBEAN OIL								
JAN	5710	5630	5632*	-40	JAN	1815	1791	1792*	-8	JAN	1874	1848	1850*	-14
MAR	5842	5760	5764*	-50	MAR	1818	1797	1798*	-5	MAR	1920	1890	1891*	-16
MAY	5974	5900	5902*	-44	MAY	1818	1803	1804*	-5	MAY	1960	1932	1932*	-17
JULY	6094	6020	6024*	-44	JULY	1840	1826	1830*	-1	JULY	1992	1962	1963*	-16
AUG	6120	6060	6060*	-36	AUG	1847	1836	1836*	-2	AUG	2000	1970	1970*	-15
SEP	6132	6082	6082*	-22	SEP	1855	1845	1845*	0	SEP	2010	1980	1980*	-11
NOV	6200	6144	6150*	-16	OCT	1863	1850	1852*	-3	OCT	2020	1990	1990*	-20
JAN	6284	6254	6254*	-10	DEC	1882	1878	1879*	-1	DEC	2035	2015	2015*	-10



CORN				CHICAGO WHEAT				K.C. WHEAT						
DATE	HIGH	LOW	LAST CHG	DATE	HIGH	LOW	LAST CHG	DATE	HIGH	LOW	LAST CHG			
MAR	2394	2376	2382*	-2	MAR	4110	4084	4092*	-6	MAR	4080	4064	4070*	-6
MAY	2452	2440	2442*	-2	MAY	3892	3864	3880*	-6	MAY	3896	3876	3892*	+6
JULY	2496	2484	2490*	0	JULY	3614	3592	3604*	-2	JULY	3700	3684	3694*	+2
SEP	2486	2470	2480*	+6	SEP	3664	3650	3654*	-4	SEP	3734	3714	3734*	0
DEC	2482	2466	2482*	+12	DEC	3772	3760	3764*	+4	DEC	3830	3820	3820*	0
MAR	2550	2530	2550*	+14	MAR	2170	2170	2170*	+1974	MAR	3924	3906	3912*	-4
MAY	2592	2586	2590*	+10	MAY	2224*			+4	MAY	3910	3896	3900*	0
JULY	1550	1500	1506*	-22	JULY	2254*			+4	JULY	3806	3802	3806*	+2
MAY	1630	1574	1576*	-26	MAY					MAY	3780	3774	3780*	+4
JULY	1700	1650	1654*	-30	JULY					JULY	3880	3820	3830*	+10