

# On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



Seems to me I recall reading that having a stork nest on your barn brought good luck.

If memory serves me right that belief originated in areas near the sea, where fish-catching storks make their homes.

Now, we have occasional visits to the ponds by green and great blue herons. Spunky, white cattle egrets stalk the milk cows during summer months, feasting on bugs stirred in the pasture grasses by the cows' feet. Once, to our amazement, we spied an osprey make a dive to the pond, grab a fish, and flap to the top of a dead tree in the fence row to enjoy the fresh dinner.

But not a sign of a good luck stork. Wonder if a guinea would be a suitable substitute?

Our flock of five guineas is apt to turn up just about anywhere on the farm, including on the barn. On bitter cold or rainy days, they hang around the old barn, scratching in corners and crannies for bits of grain dropped by heifers and seeds fallen from hay and straw.

They seem to much prefer - like most of us, I guess - the more pleasant, sunny days, days on which they can roam the farmstead without wet, bedraggled tailfeathers. Often I'll glance out the kitchen window and see them cruising the meadow, pausing

near the "crick" to scratch for a tidbit or pecking at bits of gravel on the field road.

Another favorite guinea stomping grounds is the sloping hillside above the house, where contoured fields of corn stubble and hay wind out over the high horizon to the northeast. The residue of stalk, husk, occasional ear of corn missed by the harvester, and clumps of dormant alfalfa and grasses apparently offer a bountiful guinea buffet.

Still, for all their natural instincts and abilities for living off the land, the guineas are blatant opportunists.

On both the coming and the going trips between the meadow and fields, the flock of five inevitably follows a meandering route passing beneath the backyard birdfeeders. While the finches and sparrows gobble away overhead, those guineas scout every inch of turf under the feeders.

Recycling, maybe, is what the guineas do with sunflower seeds and millet escaping the feeders. And what they miss, or don't get to first, is equally enjoyed by the half-dozen backyard hens and their handsome rooster husband.

Unlike their flighty predecessors, these guineas aren't too proud or wild to come hunting a handout. Occasionally they put in

an early morning appearance outside the calf barn, screeching a demand for a favorite delicacy - dead flies. Apparently they remember their chick-hood days last summer, and how tasty were the contents of catch pan under the electric fly "zapper."

In lieu of the preferred snack, I usually toss them a couple of handfuls of calf grain. Often they'll turn their skinny heads, jut sharp beaks into the air, and slink off in opposite direction.

Okay, so I recognize rejection when I see it.

Come late afternoon, the five begin wandering toward the old bank barn, returning daily to their favorite nighttime spot, the top rail of a section of old freestalls. Sometimes, the old wild-bird instinct to roost high in a treetop takes over. Wings spread wide, emitting loud squawks, a guinea

will take to the air and land on the calf barn roof. There, silhouetted against the fading sky at dusk, the bird screeches and shrieks.

Whether it's calling the others to join it, or just showing off, I've never decided. Eventually the guinea sails gracefully back to the ground to join the rest. They've flown right by my head en route.

One recent morning, as daylight was pushing up over the woods, an unusually early - and loud - series of guinea calls splintered the dawn quiet. It took a moment to pinpoint the source of the racket - a lone guinea perched on the peak of the dairy barn, facing east, crowing at the top of its lungs.

Lots of barns sport decorative weather vanes. Ours is graced by a guinea, welcoming the new day with an ear-splitting soprano.

No stork, but it'll have to do.

## Sheep And Wool Growers To Meet

PLEASANT MOUNT (Wayne Co.) — The annual roast lamb dinner meeting of the Wayne County Sheep and Wool Growers will be held Thursday, March 15, at 7:45 p.m. in the Belmont Fire Hall (one mile west of Pleasant Mount on Route 370).

The program will include a report of the 1989 Wayne County Wool Pool and films covering sheep and wool management.

Association business will include election of directors, recognition of 4-H members who exhibited their sheep project at the 1989 Wayne County Fair, comments on the 1989 county 4-H Sheep Program, and a report of the 1989 Wayne County Wool Pool.

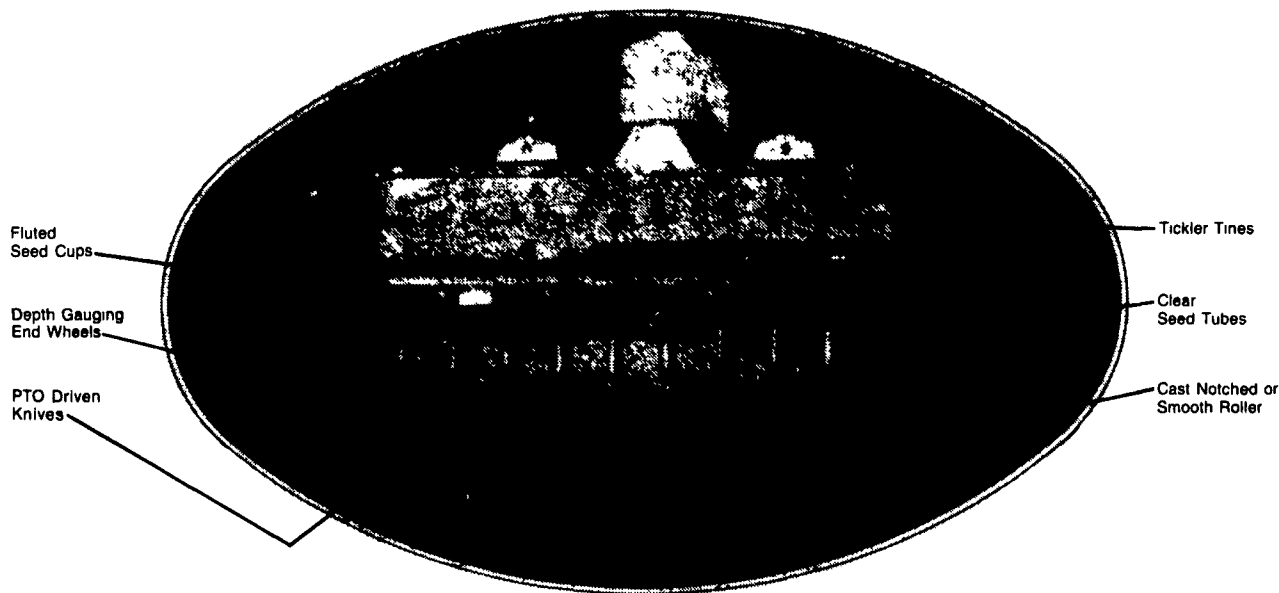
Tickets for the annual affair are \$6.00 and may be purchased at the Wayne County Cooperative extension office. Deadline for reservations is March 9.

# LAND PRIDE



## SOLID STAND SEEDER

48" and 72" WIDTHS



America's finest turf seeder is built in America by the finest name in grain drills, Great Plains Manufacturing. The metering and placement systems are tailor-made for turf grass seeds, while optional knife spacings are available in 2", 3" and 4" centers for seeding productivity.

### PENNSYLVANIA

Straley Farm Supply, Inc.  
1700 East Canal Road  
Dover, PA 17315  
717-292-2631

Betta Equipment  
3 Miles S. of Hope on 232  
Rt. 232, RD 3, Box 76  
New Hope, PA 18938-9303  
215-598-7501

Keller Brothers  
R7 Box 405  
Lebanon, PA 17042  
717-949-8501

Marshall Machinery, Inc.  
Rt 654  
Honesdale, PA 18431  
717-729-7117

Wm. Hobensack's & Sons  
1060 Greeley Avenue  
Lyttand, PA 18074  
215-675-1610

Pikeville Equipment Inc.  
RD 2, Oysterdale Road  
Oley, PA 19547  
215-967-8277

Paul Shovers Inc.  
RD 2  
Loyville, PA 17047  
717-788-3117

Tractor Parts Co.  
335 Central Road  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815  
717-784-0250

Swelgard Bros., Inc.  
RD #3, Box 13  
Halifax, PA 17032  
717-898-3414

Stouffer Bros. Inc.  
1068 Lincoln Way West  
Chambersburg, PA 17201  
717-263-8424

Stoltzfus Farm Service  
cochranville, PA  
717-893-2407

Triple H Equipment  
2368 Robert Fulton Hwy.  
Peach Bottom, PA 17663  
717-548-3775

M.S. Yearsley & Sons  
West Chester, PA  
215-696-2990

### NEW JERSEY

Owen Supply Co.  
East Avenue & Broad St  
Woodstown, N.J. 08098  
609-788-0308

Caldwell Tractor &  
Equipment, Inc.  
480 U.S. Route 46  
Fairfield, N.J. 07006  
201-227-5772

Warren County Service Center  
228 Route 94  
Columbia, N.J. 07832  
201-362-8916

Redio Tractor Sales  
North White Horse Pike  
Hammonton, N.J. 08037  
809-581-0141

Frank Rymon & Sons, Inc.  
RD 3, Box 355  
Washington, N.J. 08022  
201-689-1464

Reed Brothers  
Petticoat Bridge Rd  
Columbus, N.J. 08022  
609-267-3363

MILK  
AMERICA'S HEALTH KICK



ASHLEY  
WOOD & COAL STOVES  
NEW & USED FURNITURE

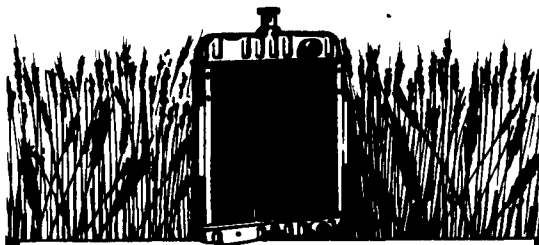
FISHER'S FURNITURE, INC.

Bart, Pennsylvania 17503

Rt. 896 at Georgetown - 6 Miles

South of Strasburg

Hours Mon Thru Thurs, 8-5, Fri. 8-3, Sat 8-12



PERFORMANCE-PROVEN AG RADIATORS

# OUTSTANDING IN ANY FIELD.

We're Your  
AG RADIATOR SPECIALISTS  
See Us For Sales,  
Repairs, Recoring, Cleaning

EPHRATA  
AUTO & RADIATOR SERVICE  
(717) 733-0613 1779 W. Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522



MODINE