

# Dairy Farming Brings Them Closer Together

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SMITHSBURG, Md. — At one time, Eva Martin resolved to never marry a farmer.

But about 30 years ago, Eva moved to Washington County, Maryland with her husband, Marlin — a farmer.

She has not regretted the decision, as so many others sometimes do because of the long, hard hours that go into running a dairy farm.

But through the years, the farm operation and the work the Martins have been able to do for the dairy industry have drawn them closer together.

## 225-acre farm

The Martins operate a 225-acre dairy farm, purchased by Marlin's father in 1955, a few miles from Smithsburg. They grow corn, alfalfa, barley, and wheat. In addition, the Martins raise 120 head of Holsteins and 400 hogs.

The dairy operation is run by sons Kenlin, 25, and Kevin, 20. Eva is active in crafts and Marlin is president of the Maryland Holstein Association.

Their daughter, Kaylena, 23, a recent graduate of Messiah College, helps her mother with a small local bookkeeping and tax preparation business.

In the past, Marlin had little help in running the huge dairy and hog farm. But since his sons have grown, he's spent more time with the association. Eva has spent a great deal of time making crafts and exhibiting her crafts at state and local dairy shows.

## Breeding operation

In February 1989, Kenlin and Kevin purchased Spectacular Valiant Mary/E.T. for \$30,000, and embryos were collected. From the resulting pregnancies, one ET calf will be sold at the Maryland Blue Ribbon Sale on Friday, April 13 in Timonium, Maryland. "Mary" had a 365-day lactation report of 34,000 pounds of milk, 1,100 pounds of butterfat, and 1,150 pounds of protein.

According to Marlin, sales of the remaining calves are yet to be determined.

Eva was raised on a farm close to Smithsburg. In 1956, her family moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, "because I had a deaf sister. When she graduated from the Maryland State School for the Deaf, we moved to Lancaster. My parents helped start the First Mennonite School for the Deaf."

The school was renamed the First Deaf Mennonite Church, located on the Old Philadelphia Pike in Smoketown.

## Lived on farm

"Until I was 13 we lived on the farm," she said. Their family ran a farm on Route 30 near Lancaster. Her father was a salesman for a feed company. They returned to Smithsburg on weekends and that's how she met Marlin.



The Martins purchased Spectacular Valiant Mary/E.T. in February 1989. And after producing 34,000 pounds of milk, 1,100 pounds of butterfat, and 1,150 pounds of protein in 365 days, embryos were collected. From the resulting pregnancies, one ET calf will be sold at the Maryland Blue Ribbon Sale at Timonium, Maryland on Friday, April 13. Sales of the remaining calves will be determined at a later date. Left to right: Kevin, Kenlin, Eva, and Marlin Martin. Photo by Andy Andrews.

"I've done various things," said Marlin. "I carried mail. Then I was a manager of a supermarket, and, about 25 years ago, we started dairying and have been since."

For 11 years, Marlin has been active with the Maryland Holstein Association at the county and state level. The association has about 800 members in Maryland to promote the Holstein breed to industry and, especially, youth.

"With farming being what it is, it's getting harder and harder to get young people interested," he said. "So the Holstein Association supports our young people through 4-H and in all the shows."

## 'Grow Into' business

Marlin is happy that his sons have taken up most of the work on the farm, and he recognizes how important it is to allow youth to "grow into" the farm business.

Eva said, "There's just no way they can do it without us letting them take what we had, because there's just no farms around here for sale." As in many counties being taken by development, many are being priced too high to farm.

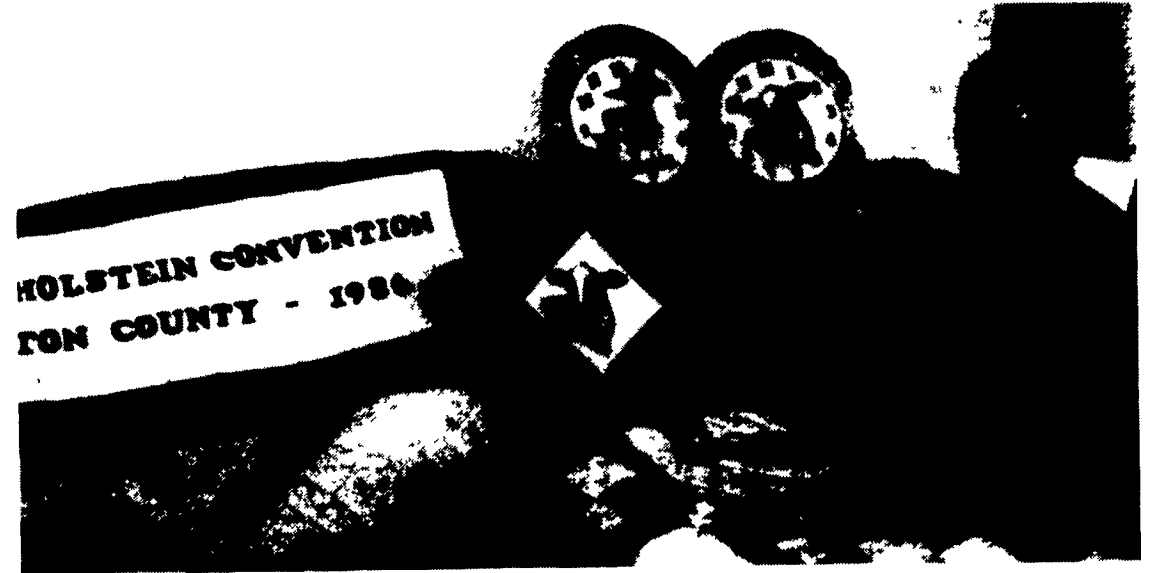
"It's been rewarding to see our children follow our footsteps," said Marlin.

The Martins spend a great deal of time working for the association and attend many functions in different counties, including banquets and shows.

(In addition to her other activities, Eva is one of Lancaster Farming's Maryland correspondents.)



The Martins operate a 225-acre dairy farm, purchased by Marlin's father in 1955, a few miles from Smithsburg, Maryland. Left to right: Eva; Marlin; Kevin; Kenlin; and Kenlin's wife, Mary.



Eva displays some of her crafts. Her specialty is quilting and pillow making with a special Holstein design. Her work realistically depicts the "look" of a Holstein.

## Results of efforts

"You work hard and you see the results of your efforts," he said. "If you're willing to put that extra effort in, you can see the results."

"The difference between an average farmer and a good farmer is the cow that milks 70 pounds and the cow that milks 100 pounds."

"But farmers, even though they have a lot of obstacles, are their own boss," he said.

In her spare time, Eva is a craft-maker — her specialty is quilting and pillow making with a special Holstein design. Her work is special in that it realistically depicts the "look" of a Holstein, with realistic features, as contrasted to the cartoon-like impressions sometimes found on commercial work.

## Other crafts

She also designs decorative clocks and other crafts with the Holstein impression.

"She can go to a ball game and quilt while everyone else is watching a game," said Marlin, with a laugh.

"It's a hobby because it's something I do not have a lot of time to get done here at home but I can take with me wherever I go," Eva said.

The only regret Eva has in not having the time away from farm chores and other responsibilities to create more crafts.

## Would still farm

Given another chance, they would still farm.

"There'd be some things we'd do differently," said Marlin. "There's be some mistakes that we made that we'd try to avoid, but I guess we'd make some other ones to take their place."

"Most of everything in life we've done together," said Eva. "What we enjoy most is probably being able to work together. That has been an asset to our marriage."

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# Farmers Have Right To Operate Produce Stands

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee has approved legislation that would protect farmers' rights to operate produce stands and to safeguard state residents against dangerous dogs, according to Senator Edward Helfrick (R-27), committee chairman.

Helfrick said Senate Bill 986 would amend the Right to Farm

Law to enable farmers to operate roadside stands to sell their products without fear of repercussions.

"Farmers should be able to sell fruits and vegetables directly, without fear of nuisance suits or zoning ordinances," said Helfrick.

The senator added an amendment to the bill that would allow farmers to sell up to 50 percent off-farm commodities under spe-

cial conditions, including drought, flood, and vandalism.

Helfrick said that two other bills concerning dogs were also released from his committee.

House Bill 820 would enable anyone attacked by a dog to file a complaint with the local district justice. If the dog is deemed dangerous, the owner must register the animal with the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement, pay a fee,

dangerous dogs to children who confine the dog, post a warning sign, and maintain liability insurance on the animal. Violation of the law would result in a penalty to the owner or confiscation of the animal.

The senator added an amendment to protect children from vicious dogs by requiring the state to adopt the "Ugh Dog" symbol as the standard symbol to identify

are too young to read posted signs. The symbol was developed by Animal-Vues, a Danville-based non-profit educational organization.

House Bill 159 would increase the penalties for taunting or torturing law enforcement dogs and prohibit the denial of public accommodations, such as theaters or hotels, to anyone working with a police dog.