

**Linda Wagner
Wayne Co.
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Born and raised on a New Jersey dairy farm, Linda Wagner learned to read DHIA records as a kid. In 1970, she graduated from Kansas State with a B.S. degree in wildlife biology. "At that time, positions for women weren't open in that field," Linda said. She married James Wagner and



Linda Wagner

taught school for four years before pursuing a master's degree in aquatic biology. After that, she and her husband moved to Wisconsin to manage a farm with 450 registered Holsteins. Eventually, the Wagners returned to Pennsylvania to manage an investors' farm, Star Bright Holsteins, where they did embryo transplant and marketed young stock. Later, she worked on another 150 commercial herd. With a background rich in dairying, Linda landed the milk tester

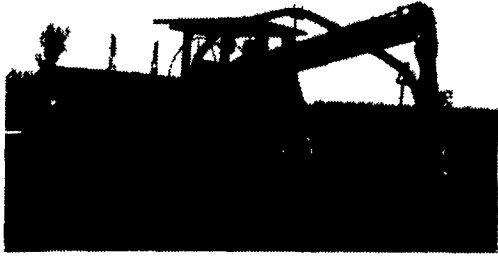
job 10 years ago in the Wayne County area. The job opening came at a good time since her folks were retiring and asked Linda's husband to manage their 125-acre Wayne County farm. Linda tests 38 herds that require her to be at the farm anywhere between 4:30 and 9:00 a.m. She finds the record keeping and management opportunities fulfilling. From her own extensive experience in breeding, management, nutrition, feed, and health-check programs, Linda has been able to help many farmers vastly improve their herds and attain lower somatic cell counts. When she first started, she found that many farmers did not organize and keep-up-to-date records. Taught to be efficient, she finds great pleasure in filing the reports and showing farmers how to make better use of the reports.

She credits her experience on a dairy judging team with her ability to recognize each cow by sight on most of the herds she covers. She said, "I know the cows name, history, and enough to talk intelligently about each one." Every day holds its own excitement — mostly pleasant — but not all. Recently, on a foggy, misty morning, a bear ran into her car and caused \$2,000 worth of damage. "I've learned to carry a shovel and dig myself out of snow banks," said Linda. The Wagners have a four-year-old daughter, causing Linda to learn the fine-art of balancing child-rearing and a career. After 10 years of DHIA testing, Linda said, "It's a wonderful experience being with dairymen and helping them improve their rolling herd average."

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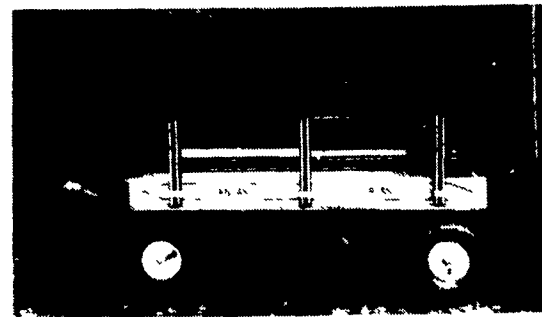
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