

Washington Dairyman: Use Caution, Pay Cash

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — John Tenneson, who will be a featured speaker at the Pennsylvania Holstein Convention, held in Reading from Feb. 21 through Feb. 23, started in the dairy business right out of high school when he began working with his younger brother, Glen.

The brothers purchased the all-grade herd owned by their uncle and rented their father's farm which had absolutely no buildings or facilities except a 23-stanchion milking barn. The only registered cows they had to begin with were the two or three which had been 4-H project animals.

They began adding registered cows by purchasing older or damaged cows at sales in the area, as financial resources were very limited to say the least.

Their father gave his sons two major pieces of advice.

First, he cautioned them that the registered business was one to be very wary of as some of the people involved were not too trustworthy.

Secondly, he said to buy all the tractors possible, build all the barns needed, buy all the cows wanted, and purchase all the land desired — as long as you pay CASH!!

That was the beginning of Skagvale Registered Holsteins. And with those words of advice, you can imagine it was a good many years before the Skagvale herd was all registered.

Today after more than 35 years of experience, the brothers still find a lot of people and ideas in the Holstein business to be skeptical of!

Perhaps that's been a major factor in the unique and successful farming and breeding strategies employed at Skagvale all these many years.

When the farm is turned over to the next generation, the same advice will be given: Question every single shortcut, get-rich-quick gimmick presented by the registered business; and always pay CASH!

The small Skagvale herd (averaging about 40 milking cows) has bred 11 cows with 200,000 pounds or more lifetime, including two 300,000 pound lifetime!

All were sired by Skagvale-bred sires except two. All were classified Excellent except two, who were 88 and 87 points.

Numerous more cows with lifetimes of 150,000 to 199,000 pounds carry the Skagvale prefix. Several Skagvale-bred cows have made 2x records from 35,000 to over 44,000 pounds.

Nearly 70 Excellent females have been bred in the small Skagvale herd, including two at 95 points, two at 94 points, and five more at 93 points. Most have been sired by Skagvale Farms herd-sires!

Six All-American nominations have been garnered by Skagvale-bred animals. In 1971, Skagvale Graceful Hattie broke a world's record which had stood for decades when she completed her 2x record of 44,019M 1,505F at seven years of age. This event brought immediate national and international attention to Skagvale.

The current BAA stands at 110.9 and the current Rolling

Herd Average is 20,795M 3.9% 805F 3.4% 698P. Every cow in the herd is home-bred.

John Tenneson has spoken at Holstein conventions or seminars in 15 different states or provinces. Internationally, he was a keynote speaker at Canada's "Benchmark 100" symposium in 1984 and at the New Zealand Friesian Conference in 1988.

He has also judged major shows in nine western states and provin-

ces, and was a director of Northwest Dairyman's Assoc., "Darigold."

In the area of community service, John is a dedicated Rotarian (and past club president) and was a 4-H club leader for over 20 years. He has served on boards of his church, Bible camp, and group homes for troubled youth.

His current hobbies include raising exhibition type chickens (Brahmas, Minorcas, Cochins),

and intensive raised-bred vegetable gardening.

He and his wife Beverly have two daughters and a son. Jonelle has a B.S. from Pacific Lutheran U. and is beginning a business career; Carolyn is a sophomore at Cal Poly (San Luis Obispo, Calif.); and Mark is a junior and redshirt-sophomore starting quarterback at Eastern Washington University.

PFA: Rescind Dairy Assessment

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — "The federal government should rescind the assessment placed on dairymen starting January 1," Harold M. Shaulis, Jr., chairman of the dairy committee of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA), said today. "It's an unfair tax, which will harm agriculture and do little to balance the federal budget.

"Recent milk price drops are creating financial stress, not only hurting dairymen but also placing a heavy burden on the state's overall economy," the Somerset County farmer stated. "The 'dairy tax', which amounts of five cents per hundredweight in 1991 and increases to 11.25 cents in 1992, will make the dairy outlook worse. Eliminating the 'dairy tax' would save the average dairyman \$5,131 during the next five years."

Shaulis, a PFA Board of Direc-

tors member, explained that federal farm programs amount to a little more than one percent of the federal budget, yet cuts in farm programs including the 'dairy tax', are two to three times higher than reductions in other areas.

Shaulis also called for the reinstatement of the capital gains tax treatment provision which was eliminated in 1986. "If this tax provision was reinstated, it would save the dairyman another \$6,000-plus during the five years of the federal farm program," he said. Presently, the average dairyman loses about \$1,210 per year to federal taxes in the sale of cull cows, because of

the loss of this tax provision.

"Hopefully, the lower prices will not last very long," the farm leader said, "because the average dairy farmer will soon be selling milk for about \$2.00 per hundredweight (cwt.) less than his cost of production. Agriculture is the Commonwealth's number one business and dairy is the single largest part of agriculture's economy. So everyone connected with the agriculture industry will feel this downturn in the dairy prices."

He went on to explain that it's important to realize that the same factor responsible for the record

high dairy prices a year ago, namely the amount of milk supply, is responsible for the low prices now. Since the dairy industry is dependent on the national milk supply and demand, very little can be done by the individual farmer to prevent this roller coaster ride affecting dairy prices.

Shaulis said that in 1988 PFA successfully initiated the need for price increases with the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB), which held hearings to gather testimony.

PFA is a general farm organization with more than 23,000 family members in Pennsylvania,

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19.50	15.52	6.02

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