

Widows: Can They Survive On The Family Farm?

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff

This is the third article in a series about obstacles widows face when they remain on the family farm.

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) — Two years ago, Doris Brubaker's husband complained of extreme weakness and then crumbled to the floor.

The shock of his sudden death was devastating to Doris. She said, "I wish we had had a week to discuss what should be done with the farm."

She echoed the sentiments of many other farm widows who said, "It's easier to get the farmwork done than it is to deal with the emotional lost."

Marvin Brubaker was only 55 years old when he died. He had expected to continue farming until he was at least 65.

After an illness of less than one week, undiagnosed stomach cancer claimed his life. He left an 80-acre farm with a stone and brick farmhouse on it. Both the Brubak-

ers' sons and a daughter were married. The deceased Brubaker had been carrying the workload of farming his own land, plus renting additional 65- and a 70-acre plots of land to raise corn, wheat, and soybeans. Six years before his death, Brubaker had sold his dairy herd and started housing his neighbor's dry cows in the barn.

"Fortunately," Doris said, "I had taken care of the bookkeeping so I did not feel completely lost."

After much discussion with her children, Doris worked out a plan. She would continue her part time waitressing at Country Table Restaurant, feed the dry cows, and do the bookkeeping. Her two sons would continue their jobs as mail carrier and Sico truck driver and farm on the side.

"My sons' first love is to farm," Doris said. The sons said that field work is a hobby for them and that they want to finish what their dad had begun. The farm has been in the family since 1929.

Doris said, "It was purchased during the depression years, and that inspires me to remember that times might not always be easy, but we can make it."

As far as a plan, "We take one day at a time," Doris said. After the first year, the sons relinquished renting the 70-acre plot because it was too hectic to hold down full-time jobs and farm the land on the side.

But the family is determined to work together to keep the farm in the family. Doris said that she experienced no problems with the bank, but it is not practical for her to live alone in the large farm-



Doris Brubaker, whose has been a widow for two years, remains on her Mount Joy farm. She feeds the dry cows and keeps the books. Her two married sons have full-time jobs but work on the farm evenings and weekends as a hobby. "Without their help, I could not have managed," Doris said.

house. She had hoped her sons could built on the land but DER did not approve the land for building. The family is trying to subdivide the land so that one son and his family can buy the house while Doris continues to own the land.

Doris advises widows not to make hasty decisions after the death of a spouse. "Feelings change," she warned.

Her husband had bought a dog two days before his death. When her husband died, Doris decided to sell the dog.

"Fortunately, I waited. I became so attached to the dog that now I wouldn't want to part with him," she said.

She believes for family members to work together, each person must share feelings and don't hold anything back.

For herself, sharing the farming chores with her sons has been a good experience. "I couldn't have kept the farm without their help," she said.

Despite her sons' abilities to help carry on the farmwork, Doris

said, "Emotionally, it's really tough."

She echoed the sentiments of many other farm widows who said, "It's easier to get the farmwork done than it is to deal with the emotional lost."

Doris finds great strength in her church.

"I take one day at a time," Doris said. "It takes faith to carry me through. I learned to lean on God more. I'm really thankful for my sons sticking with me."

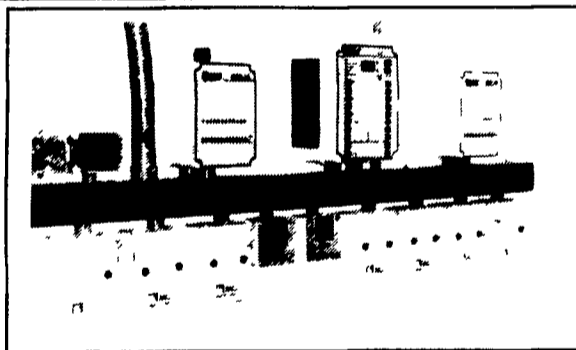
aerotech® The Shape of Efficiency



Any ventilation system is only as good as its weakest link. That's why **aerotech** designs fans heaters, cooling equipment, controls and field support into every system.



aerotech offers and exclusive certified systems warranty to guarantee the performance of systems built to design department specifications.



Fancom COMPUTERIZED CONTROL SYSTEMS are PROVEN TECHNOLOGY engineered to your ventilation system for precise temperature control.

LET **TRI-COUNTY & aerotech** HELP YOU DESIGN A MORE PROFITABLE VENTILATION SYSTEM.

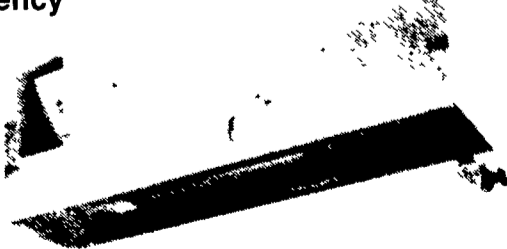
9-48" FANS



Cast Iron Propellers And Discharge Cones That Can Boost Air-Flow Efficiency Up To 15%.

AIR MAKEUP HEATER

Proven Reliability And Efficiency



EVAPORATIVE COOLING

Aerocool™

New Aluminum Headers And Footers For Long Life



TRI-COUNTY
CONFINEMENT SYSTEMS, INC.

608 E. Evergreen Rd., Lebanon, PA 17042

Ph: 717-274-3488

Hours: Mon.-Fri.
7:00 to 4:30;
Sat 8:00 to 12:00

