

DHIA Rolling Herd Averages

Date	Cows	Milk	Fat (lbs.)	Fat (%)
Feb. '91	70	21,992	822	3.8
Aug. '89	63	20,145	761	3.8
Aug. '88	63	19,656	725	3.7



Sinking Springs Farm, Inc.

Half a Century of Dairying and Still Going Strong



When Marty Grey talks about farming, people listen. Especially if they're tuned into the morning farm report on York's WSBA-AM radio. Grey has been the station's farm commentator since 1979, when Herman Stebbins turned over both his microphone and his job as farm manager at Sinking Springs Farm.

The York County farm is owned by the Appell Family, which also owns Susquehanna Broadcasting, WSBA's parent company. The Appells started broadcasting in the early 1930s and bought the dairy farm in 1939. Stebbins was their first farm manager and held the job until he retired.

Grey grew up on a dairy farm in the Hudson Valley of New York and spent five years with the cooperative extension service in New York State as a dairy agent. He got his start as a broadcaster during his extension career, when he and a fellow agent hosted a live

radio show called the Morning Milkhouse.

Although he enjoys his broadcasting assignments, Grey spends a lot more time with the Sinking Springs cows than he does in the studio.

"I like to go out into the barn after dinner and just spend time with the cows when nobody's around, no machines are running and there's nothing to take my mind off the animals," Grey said.

"I look at them and think about how they should be fed, how we want to breed them. I catch a lot of little things, too. Like a health problem just starting. Or a water bowl that wasn't cleaned out."

"Right after I started working here Herman Stebbins told me it's the little things that separate the top herds from the also-rans. And that's something we try to live by here at Sinking Springs."

A Family Affair

Deep cow families are one of the foundations of the Sinking Springs herd. One cow family is represented by four individuals in the milking herd.

Midge, shown here, classified VG-89 as a four-year-old. She had 29,480 pounds of milk, with 1139 (3.9%) fat and 966 (3.3%) protein.

Her dam, Sinking Springs Intense Matti, is classified 2E-91. Her latest lactation produced 29,210 pounds of milk, 1030 (3.5%) fat and 921 (3.2%) protein).

Marty Grey said he uses every available breeding tool to improve the herd, including three different breeding services.

The Sinking Springs cows average well over 21,000 pounds of milk, and the herd has included quite a few 30,000 pound milkers. Grey said his breeding philosophy isn't really complicated.

"I listen to what everyone has to say about their sires and about our cows," he said. "Then I go out in the barn and I look at the cow. I think about how to improve her, I think about her family and her history. And then I decide how to breed her."

The farm's breeding program runs in one-year cycles, Grey said, and they don't work on improving more than two type traits at a time.



Feeding the Total Cow

When Marty Grey looks at a cow and thinks about her feeding program, he tries to figure out what's going to happen to the animal five or six months in the future.

"I try to take into account her body condition, how fast she's likely to drop off in production, any health problems she might have had," said Grey. "Then I try to figure out how to feed her."

Grey said he likes to keep things uncomplicated, as the feeding program demonstrates. The cows get 45 to 55 pounds of corn silage a

day and 12 to 14 pounds of high-quality baled hay.

Total grain averages 22 pounds per day of Pennfield's PFR base and topdress to the 68 cows in milk, and varies from six pounds for cows in late lactation to 36 pounds for the very high producers.

"What's in the feed bunk is important," said Grey, "but I think one of the most critical parts of our nutritional program is water. Each cow drinks 35 to 50 gallons of water a day, and we make sure that she gets it when she wants it."



PA 1-800-732-0467

MD, DE & NJ 1-800-233-0202

pennfield feeds

Quality - Performance - Service