

Bedford Jr. Field Day

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They also observed smoothness of shoulders and how far the legs of the cow were spread apart.

Carl Yoder owns a 500 acre dairy farm with 75 registered Holsteins. He recently took a

grand champion award at the Central Dairy Show.

The Yoders have two farm employees. Carl's wife, Jane, and their children, Jeff, Jessica, and Jackie also help on the farm.



Host for the day Carl Yoder, with his wife, Jane, and son, Jeff.

Wetlands Or Rights

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various agencies and getting the permits needed."

By the spring of 1990, he continued to have extreme difficulty in scheduling agency personnel and was frustrated by the slow turnaround of paperwork. But he decided not to plant the field since he was certain that any day, he would receive permission to do the work.

"Everytime I contacted the Corps, I would talk to a secretary who said that the person I needed to contact was not in. My calls were not returned until six weeks or six months later or not at all.

The Corps were not sure where the paperwork was and the process dragged on and on.

"Neither the DER nor the Corps respond promptly," Troop said, "They were not very accomodating. I wasted so many phone calls trying to get hold of them again and again.

Eventually Troop had to reapply because he was told that his paperwork had gotten mixed up with Maryland paperwork.

"It seemed like a real lack of coordination and effort," Troop

said. "It is difficult when the Corps is so far away and they have so large an area of jurisdiction."

Finally, in the fall 1990, Troop was given permission to do partial restoration to the tiled land.

The Corps said that part of the previously tiled land had converted back to wetlands and could not be drained. The area where crops had been tilled and tile remained underneath was designated as cropland, but he was not allowed to put in drain tile in the area that had converted back to wetlands. He was allowed to run a solid line through the wetlands to carry the water into the pond.

Troop did not need to pay for a permit since he had only wanted to replace tile, but he did need a permit to take water from tile system in field through a wetland to reach the pond. To take the four-inch plastic tubing through the wetland he also needed a utility line permit. Permits were needed for outfall structures. The line going from pond back to stream that needed replacement also needed a DER permit.

A general purpose permit was needed for utility line. Those per-

mits allowed a contractor to put in the system according to SCS specs as long as no perforated pipe was put in wetlands.

Troop also had to contact the Fish Commission, notify local municipality, and send a letter to the county planning commission stating his plans.

"A large majority of us have always thought that it's our land and we can do anything with it that we want, so these regulations go against our grain a bit."

On the other hand, Troop sees the necessity to preserve wetlands. He said, "I've seen an awful lot of swamps drained, about 90 percent are gone in this area. They had served as a catch basin for a lot of heavy rains. Now big storms make a big flush through system. In the summertime, streams are low, for there are no slow feeding of the streams from the swamps."

Troop said, "Each fellow tries to get a little more pasture or a little more cropland. Each sees it as improving his operation. While more production per acre and getting rid of muddy areas appear to be beneficial, if you stand back and look at the broader view, there is a lot of loss that the individual working the ground doesn't appreciate."

"Sometimes I scratch my head. I went through all the details and tried to do everything the way it was supposed to be done, and then I look around the area and see a backhoe tearing things apart without permits or consideration to anything and nothing every comes of it. Is it really necessary to go through all the paperwork for a few acres?"

Troop estimates it will take him 15 to 20 years before he sees any profit above the expense it took him to retille the farm land.

Troop offers these guidelines for other farmers.

• 1. If you have farmland that has been tiled in the past, as soon as you suspect the system is having trouble, get it maintained, because if it deteriorates, you are going to lose it because it will return to wetlands. The key is to get it done early.

• 2. Be on the safe side and ask permission from all the agencies so you can be sure of Ok. You don't need the headaches of prosecution. Remain level headed. Document all conversations in a work ledger to protect yourself.

• 3. Start application early, long before you intend to do the work.

• 4. Make sure you notify the proper agencies. Call the 800 utility number three days in advance. If you do not give advance notice, you are open to prosecution.

• 5. If it is time to plant your field, plant. The biggest aggravation is waiting for phone calls and losing valuable time.

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