

Glennon Doesn't Let Anything Interfere With Goats

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In June 1991 Heather Glennon became the Pennsylvania Dairy Goat Association Youth Representative. Heather, 15, is a junior at Shippensburg High School. She is the daughter of Robert and Mary Lou Brennen. Her role as Youth Representative is one that she seems to enjoy very much. Her love for goats filters through her conversation. When asked how she enjoys her new role, she said, "I love talking to people (about goats) and like to share information about how to improve their goats."

So far she has represented the Dairy Goat Association at Ag Progress Days where she answered people's questions about the animals and handed out literature. She will be represented with the other Commodity Queens during the Farm Show, presenting the Governor with products from her commodity. She shared that one year the Youth Representative

presented the Governor with a stuffed animal- a goat. She'll also be able to represent the association at 4-H shows and fairs and regional shows. The closest regional show to Pennsylvania is in South Carolina. In 1993, Pennsylvania is hosting the National Show. It's held annually between July and September.

Heather's story of how she began her interest and love for goats began eight years ago when she was only seven years old. At the time she was living in Florida with her parents when a friend needed to get rid of the goats because they kept getting into the cattle trough! The story goes that the farmer ordered his wife to be rid of the goats by the time he came back home. So the Glennons picked the two goats up in their '67 Chevy! These two goats expanded into the herd of 30 goats that Heather raises.

Heather shares that the goats have wonderful personalities. "They make great friends. Some are bossy. Some stay behind." It's

apparent that Heather is very attached to them. Each of the 30 goats has a name. Aggie was the first goat and is still in the herd today. She is a Nubian, a breed originating from Egypt by way of Great Britain. Nubians are distinguishable by their floppy ears and their Roman nose, an arched nose. Their milk also has the highest butterfat content.

In the herd, Heather also has many Oberhasli. Oberhasli are a breed from Switzerland known for their upright ears and brown coloring with black markings. These beautiful animals can often be pictured in front of the sloping Alpine Mountains.

Each morning Heather arises at 4:00 a.m. to begin milking the goats. It takes about five minutes to milk each animal. Presently they are milking about 12-13 goats. The goats average about 1,500 pounds of milk a year. However, some goats produce as much as 4,000 pounds a year. Their milk stays strictly on the farm for the calves.

Goats breed in the fall and bear young or "freshen" in the spring. They typically have two to three "kids". One day after school Heather was surprised to find Aggie was delivering not two or three goats- but five goats- quintuplets! The female "kids" stay on the farm as part of the replacement herd; the male are sold for meat.

Heather's mother, Mary Lou Brennen thinks that it's been a wonderful experience for her daughter. Heather naturally loves to talk about the animals and it's been a natural outlet for her to do this. Mrs. Brennen has made a conscious effort to give Heather the responsibility of caring for the goats. The only thing that Heather doesn't like is getting up so early every morning to milk the goats.

Two years ago while the Glennons were living in Maryland, they were asked to help do a NBC News Special for Dairy Goat Awareness Week. Every year the special week is held in June. So, while they had a news crew on their farm doing the story, the goat licked the camera lens!

The goats are pretty healthy and are fed a prepared mix of goat

feed, hay, and water. This year has been a little tougher with the drought. The animals have eaten more hay. They are a healthy herd. They receive their check-up annually from the vet. They are also a member of DHIA, Dairy Herd Improvement Association.

Heather plans to go to college after graduation to study Veterinary Science.



Heather feeds the goats a few flakes of hay. The drought has left the pastures bare, so the goats are regularly fed hay to make up for the pasture loss.



Pictured are two of the breeds Heather has in her herd. Oberhasli goats, left, have upright ears; Nubians, right, have floppy ears.

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