

## Three Were Princess Candidates

# Being A Dairy Princess Is A Hess Family Tradition

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GETTYSBURG (Adams County) — The Adams County Dairy Princess pageant will be less stressful this year for the John Hess family, Gettysburg.

None of their daughters is a participant in the June 13 competition at Biglerville High School.

For the past five out of seven pageants, one of John and Bonnie Hess' four daughters has been a princess candidate. And when Jayne Hess crowns her successor, she will be the third Hess sister to have devoted a year to representing Adams County's dairy industry as princess.

"I guess Mom and Dad always hoped we would participate," says Jennie Hess Brown, 24, the oldest of the Hess family's five children. Jennie was the first Hess family representative to compete in the pageant, and served as the Adams County dairy princess in 1985-86.

Josie Hess, 23, served as alternate princess in 1986-87, and as the county's dairy princess in 1987-88. Jayne, 19, competed in the 1990 pageant and won her princess tiara and banner last June. Joy, the youngest at 14, has a few years to wait until she reaches the pageant's minimum age. Lone brother, John, Jr. has helped fill in with chores during his sisters' years of princess activities.

Dairy promotion has been a long-time commitment for the

Hess family, and attendance at pageants and promotional activities were a part of the children's growing-up years.

"We rode floats when we were little and saw the pageant each year," remembers Jennie.

"And ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be a dairy princess," adds Jayne.

But the Hess sisters' involvement with the dairy industry goes much deeper than pageants and floats. From the time they were big enough to lug around a feed scoop, each of the Hess children had played an active role in carrying out the day-to-day chores at Jobo Farms.

Jennie and Josie recall helping with calf feeding when they were about five or six years old, and advancing to assisting with milking at age eight. With two older sisters and a brother already helping on the farm, Jayne assumed similar responsibilities about two years of age later than her sisters.

John and Bonnie Hess both grew up in Lancaster County, and after their marriage, continued working for a few years on his home farm at Washington Boro. Jennie was three when they had the opportunity to purchase their present farm.

The Hess' original 50-cow herd has expanded over the years to 240 milking animals and 200 head of young stock, primarily Holsteins, and some 1400 acres of



The Hess sisters gather beneath the official dairy princess portraits. Front are Joy, left, and Jennie; rear are Josie, left, and Jayne.

crops.

This family has always worked closely together, including participating in both 4-H and FFA cattle showing events.

"They encouraged us to join and show in 4-H," says Jennie, the only one of the five siblings who was not in FFA programs as well as 4-H.

Josie, first of the Hess children through the New Oxford High School's Onewago FFA chapter, was heavily involved in both vo-ag dairy showing and public speaking.

"John and I won almost the same FFA awards; sometimes we got compared," she grins, sympathizing with expectations held up for younger brother and sisters who followed in the footsteps of an older one. "Joy probably has it the worst, because she's the youngest."

In fact, Joy has already found a way to step aside into her own individuality. She has opted to show Brown Swiss animals, rather than the registered Holsteins exhibited by the rest of the family.

Each of the five had an initial project animal purchased for them by John Hess, but was then "on their own" to develop a show string and herd. And all saw varying degrees of success.

Jennie recalls never making the state 4-H competition with any of her project animals, missing several chances by one placing. Josie, however, took a first place at the state 4-H show during her first year, and returned to the Harrisburg competition nearly every year.

"I was in last place my first two years and then had a 3-year-old that went to states," says Jayne, who now owns seven head in her final year as a 4-H member.

Having grown up in a family dedicated to dairying and dairy promotion, it was only natural that each of the Hess sisters would pursue the princess crown and the opportunity to represent the milk industry. And each of the three has found her dairy princess experience useful in decision-making for the future.

A 1991 graduate of New Oxford High School, Jayne enrolled for the fall semester at Millersville, then decided to pursue an agriculture-related

major. She transferred to Penn State York in January, and will move to main campus in September, majoring in ag economics and rural sociology, with minors in dairy and animal science and English.

"Due to the experiences I've had as dairy princess, I'm interested in marketing and public relations in the dairy industry," Jayne says of her career plans. "I've really enjoyed it."

Many of Jayne's princess visits took her to elementary schools and retirement homes. She also promoted dairy foods to weight-loss aerobics groups and assisted with the popular Adams County Ice Cream Extravaganza.

With her sister Josie assisting as booking chairman, Jayne has been able to meet most of the incentive requirements from the state promotion committee. An interest in journalism has helped Jayne with the four dairy-related articles she sends out each month for newspaper use, often based on special events, such as June Dairy Month or National Ice Cream Day. Recipes are usually included.

Ideas for her articles and other promotional activities are both gleaned from and shared with others through the COW COMMUNICATOR, a newsletter sent to all county dairy princesses from the state office. In December, Jayne won a \$15 promoter-of-the-month runner-up award from the state committee.

Josie's reign likewise took her to numerous Adams County elementary schools, as well as to senior citizens' centers and Grange meetings. Her promotional puppet show featured Garfield the cat visiting a farm and a dairy-related Simon Says game was a favorite with children's groups.

"We always gave out a dairy snack," emphasizes Josie of her promotional visits to schools.

During Josie's reign, the highly-successful Ice Cream extravaganza was initiated by the county's promotion committee. A commendable-sized crowd turned out at the Gettysburg Recreation Park, even with the first year's rainy weather. The annual ice cream celebration continues to be

a popular July event with the area residents.

After graduation in 1987, Josie majored in dairy science at Penn State York campus for a year. She became a DHIA test supervisor in Adams County, and then, a year later, took over the herdsman duties on the family farm. Josie's responsibilities include records, herd health and the twice-daily milkings in the 24-stall, 12-unit, California flat parlor. Her own dairy herd includes 3 Brown Swiss animals.

Josie has continued to play an active role in Adams County's dairy promotion program and has been the princess' booking chairman for the past two years.

School programs were a favorite part of Jennie's reign as well, where she gave youngsters educational handouts and played games. Her promotional skit on Mrs. Santa Claus was well received by her youthful audiences.

"Being dairy princess broadened my mind to what was available in careers in agriculture. I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I met a lot of different people and got some direction," reflects Jennie, who took a half-year break between high school and college, allowing her more time to fulfill her dairy princess responsibilities.

After initially enrolling for a two-year agriculture business degree at Penn State's York campus, Jennie relocated to State College a semester later for a four-year program. She graduated after the 1989 fall semester, having majored in ag economics and rural sociology with a dairy science minor, and began working as York County's dairy extension agent in January 1990.

Recently married to Dale Brown of Tunkhannock, Jennie and her husband live near the Hess' farm, where he is employed assisting with both dairy herd and crops. The couple owns 15 head of cows and heifers.

So, this year, when the Adams County Dairy Princess pageant gets under way Saturday evening, June 13, John and Bonnie Hess can sit back, relax, enjoy the program - and let parental nervousness to someone else.



Adams County Dairy Princess Jayne Hess pours a tall, cold glass of her favorite beverage.



Jennie Hess Brown, now York County extension dairy agent, reviews records at the computer in the Hess family's farm office.