

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



Work, you'll be happy to know, is "in."

At least it is fashion-wise, according to one of the latest trends supposedly sweeping the cutting-edge high-fashion setters.

Rejoice, farm folk friends, for the sort of chore duds we don on a daily basis are being sought out by the hip, the hep, the rockers and the rappers.

Work clothes are "hot." On the other hand, one fashion report I recently read quoted a boutique owner as noting that the manual labor look is "cool." All depends on your preferred terminology.

Sturdy cotton twill jackets like equipment repairmen might wear on a chilly day and the style of light coveralls favored by our daughter when she used to milk or clip cows are reportedly turning up on the racks of funky boutiques. So are heavy work boots

and "farmer" style caps.

And, by gosh, denim is BIG again. But then, 'round the farm, denim is always big.

What other fabric, for goodness sake, can be dragged through the mud by an obstinate show calf, hung on the yard fence for a couple of days, wrapped around a greasy part hauled to the equipment dealer, mildew while wrapped in a damp ball halfway under the pickup seat - then after a good laundering be worn, acceptably, to call on your favorite banker?

Just try that with your good Sunday suit and see what it looks like afterward.

Our denim jeans nearly always see a second life as a pair of denim shorts. While, once upon a time, no farmer worth his hayfork would be caught dead with knees exposed, our resident crew com-

fortably bares hairy legs under denim cutoffs come summer's worst heat. (Unless we're unloading hay or straw bales.)

Colored denim is resurging with this wave of fashion, turning up in the likes of pink denim jumpers. Our dresser drawers embrace garb in a variety of denim shades - all hues of blue, except for my ratty pair of beige denim cutoffs..

Then there's the continuing high-fashion popularity of that farm classic of recent years - the tee shirt. Colored tee-shirts become standard garb hereabouts just as soon as the weather warms enough for them to hang their quilted flannel shirts on the nearest tractor hydraulic lever and then forget where they left them.

We generally lay in a new supply each spring, in anticipation of the sunsplashed season ahead. I have rooted through an entire counter of tee-shirts on sale to find extra-larges in their preferred colors.

And checkout clerks give me one of those cocked-head, raised eyebrow looks when I check out with eight or ten colored pocket-tees at one time.

Actually, the popularity of these favorites has enabled me to sort of color-code the Farmers. They're a dead giveaway as to who's operating a tractor or piece of equipment, even in a distant field.

Bright, jaunty, neon-like shades will immediately be claimed by the youngest Farmer. This

spring's tee-shirt sale acquisitions included one in a bright fuchsia and an equally brilliant melon-orange shade, which he promptly snagged from the stack and carted off, along with one in fire-engine red.

After endless launderings and constant exposure to equipment grime and grease, all three look like they were lathered in bleach and tie dyed with hydraulic oil.

The older Farmer leans toward navy tee-shirts, which tend to tell-tale less the abundant manure

splotches and weld-burn holes. However, the spring sale had no navy shirts, but a plentiful supply of the prettier bright-aqua. He's the, one in the swimming pool shade, fading along with the summer.

All the season's tee-shirts, by this time of year, have seen better days. But, when they came looking for shop rags a couple of days ago, I came up emptyhanded of suitable soft fabric.

Sorry, no rags available. We're still wearing 'em.

Parenting Workshop

TOWANDA (Bradford Co.) — *Parenting ... It's Easy Until You Have Kids* is the theme of a new parent education program that will begin in Bradford County during September. Parents, grandparents, and parents-to-be are invited to attend. The program is free and no advance registration is required. Children are welcome to come with their parents.

Penn State Cooperative Extension of Bradford County is offering the program which is also being supported by the Bradford County Commissioners and Children and Youth Services.

The program will run for six months at four locations. In Towanda at the Children's House, next to Memorial Hospital; in Canton at the fellowship hall of the Ecumenical Parish, 43 North Center Street; in Sayre in the meeting

room at the Public Library, 122 South Elmer Avenue; and in Wyalusing at the social room of the Presbyterian Church on Church Street. Parents may attend at the location most convenient for them.

There will also be time when parents can talk to the instructor privately about individual concerns. At all four locations this time is planned for 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. No appointment is necessary.

For more information about this new parenting program, persons may contact Mrs. Cathy Guffey at Penn State Cooperative Extension of Bradford County, 701 South Fourth Street, Towanda, PA 18848, telephone (717) 265-2896.

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