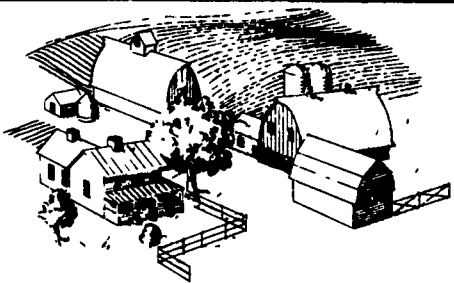


# FARM MANAGEMENT



## FARM LABOR TIPS

Alan Strock  
Farm Management Agent

With spring planting season upon us, labor is a high priority, especially if you need additional help.

Farm work is often described as dirty, dangerous, and monotonous, bringing with it long days for low pay. It doesn't have to be so if managed properly.

### No Perfect Job

No job is perfect, but better management can improve any job. National surveys reveals Supreme Court justices have the highest respect of the general public. But even their job has many disadvantages, such as long hours, a demanding dress code (including wearing a robe), stress, and, besides, they are cooped up inside all day.

### Right Person For The Right Job

When a farmer is looking for that right new employee to add to his or her business, the farmer must emphasize the advantages of the job that they will be providing. The farmer must also look for the person that has the skills that complement and enhance his or her own as well as meeting the needs of the farm operation.

## Farm Work Advantages

Farm labor does indeed have many advantages:

- Employees often feel close to God, nature, and other living things.

- Employees get to spend time outside in spring, summer, and fall in an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere.

- Farm employees often have a feeling of worthiness from knowing one's labor is providing affordable, wholesome food for the world.

- Farm work provides a wide diversity of physical and mental activities, so one doesn't get bored. Usually an employee has the satisfaction of looking at the end of the day and seeing that many jobs got done.

- The periodic rigorous physical labor tends to keep employees physically fit so they don't have to join the expensive local health club.

- Many jobs on the farm are done independently, so employees develop a sense of independence, thus expressing their personal creativity.

- Many opportunities are provided on the farm for the self-starter.

- Farm work will provide a flexible schedule and a variety of assignments.

- Employees' problem-solving skills will surely be enhanced by the frequent challenges that the weather, markets, and even their

boss will create.

- The informality of dress allows employees to feel more comfortable and clothing doesn't take a big bite out of the family budget.

- Employees don't normally have to fight a traffic jam to get to work.

- Farming usually provides the opportunity for family members to work and play together.

- Farm employees often receive excellent fringe benefits such as a house and utilities rent-free, fresh milk and meat, and even hunting and fishing privileges from their employer.

- Farming can frequently provide a competitive salary for the skilled employee.

- Most times family members will get the chance to advance and get ownership of the business.

## Farm Work Disadvantages

Just like any other job, farm work can have some disadvantages:

- Employees must at times work outside in unpleasant weather.

- Employees sometimes work long hours for below-market wages.

- Frequently, employees will have minimal chance of advancement.

- Farming can be danger-filled from poorly maintained equipment, dirt, dust, gases, and odors. Without proper protection, health can suffer.

- Certain times of the year employees won't be allowed to take vacation or other time off.

- Employees frequently have substandard benefits, including health insurance, paid vacation or sick time, life insurance, and/or disability coverage.

- Farm work is often hard, vigorous, demanding work.

- Employees usually don't have a well-defined job description and wonder what the boss really wants.

- Many tasks must be done daily

and get monotonous. Frequently one may feel the job will never get done.

- Farm work is frequently considered not prestigious.

- Employers often practice nepotism and will advance family members over deserving employees.

- The usually small work force will provide limited social interaction during the long work day.

A few of the listed disadvantages the farmer/employer can do little to improve, but the vast majority can be changed by the management skills of the farmer

## Make It Better

Farmers can provide:

- Adequate clothing for employees to wear in miserable weather so the employees are at least as comfortable as possible.

- Dust masks, goggles, coveralls, boots, and keep farm machinery properly maintained to keep the farm as safe as possible.

- A shower and clothes changing room so that employees don't have to wear dirty smelly clothes home and smell up their vehicle.

- A job for multiple part-time employees so that no employee is

overworked and feels taken advantage of.

- A variety of jobs for each employee if he or she desires variety.

## Change The Image

Farmers can change the nonglamorous image of farm jobs by providing uniforms with the employee's name and farm name on and by creating job descriptions and job titles that give prestige to the job. Farmers can send employees to meetings and show that they care about the personal growth of their employees.

Farmers can also provide tickets to a professional or local sports event or other entertainment events that would be the envy of any employee, such as a Penn State football game.

Employing the right person for the right job will make your job as the manager much easier. When hiring an employee, list the personality traits and job skills that the position demands and match that list to the best job candidate.

Find that person that sees the many advantages of the job you are providing and doesn't mind the job's minor disadvantages.

## 20 Years Of Premier Winners

TIMONIUM, Md.—Maryland Holstein breeders this week listed the Premier Breeder and Premier Exhibitor winners for the last 20 years at their State Holstein Show.

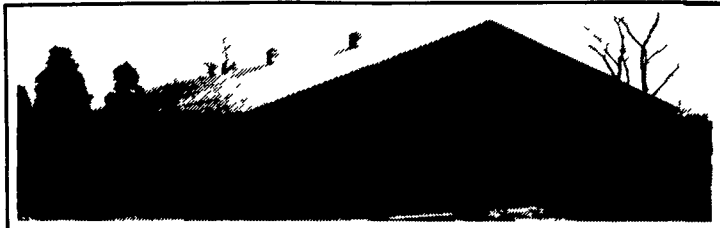
As was reported last week, the Joseph Schwartzbeck family won both awards at the recent 1993 show. It was the first time this family won both awards at the show. However, it was not, as reported (sorry about that), the first time one family or farm won both awards in the same year. As you can see from the following list, one family or farm has taken both awards many times.

The winners over the years are as follows:

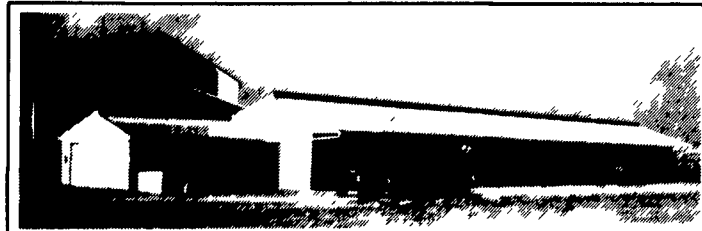
1993-Joseph Schwartzbeck Family, both; 1992-1991-1990, My Ladys Manor Farm, both; 1989, Coldsprings Farm, Premier Breeder, Hills-Hope Farm, Premier Exhibitor; 1988-1987-1986, Coldsprings Farm, both; 1985, Coldsprings Farm/Kingstead Farms, tie for Premier Breeder, Coldsprings Farm, Premier Exhibitor.

1984, Kingstead Farms, Premier Breeder, both; 1983 Gaywinds Farm, Premier Breeder, Elizabeth Gillet, Premier Exhibitor; 1982-1981-1980-1979-1978-1977-1976-1975, Kingstead Farms, both; 1974, Rinehart Farms, both; and 1973, Kingstead Farms, both.

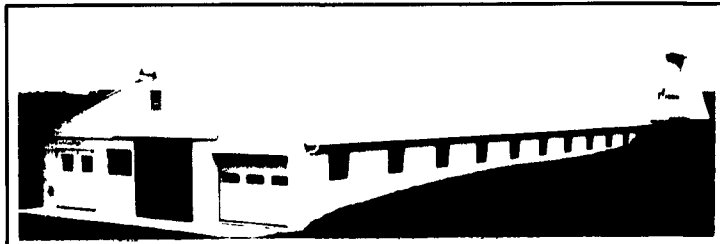
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