



Mim Kauffman greets visitors to her farmhouse.

Mim Kauffman Synonymous With Dairy Princess Promotion

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Lancaster Farming Staff
ELIZABETHTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — Mim Kauffman and dairy princess promotion are synonymous.

As coordinator for the southeast district of Pennsylvania Dairy Princess and Promotion Services, Inc. (PDPPS), Mim is responsible for overseeing dairy princess activities in nine counties and for planning the state pageant.

"I wear two hats as board member and coordinator," Mim said.

County dairy princesses are selected to represent their local dairy industry by making adults and children more aware of their need for dairy products and to foster greater understanding between urban and rural populations. The dairy princesses do this by conducting programs in schools and demonstrations in grocery stores, malls, and at fairs. They appear as guests on radio and TV shows, write articles for the local press, visit schools, and attend farm and non-farm meetings to promote dairy products.

Growing up on a non-dairy farm

in Millersville, Mim vowed she would never marry a dairy farmer because of the work involved. Of course, love took preeminence and she married dairy farmer Robert. Fortunately, she said, they only had 10 cows in the beginning and this allowed her to adapt to the work gradually. Her natural love for animals soon was transferred to cows. By the time, she and her husband purchased the Elizabethtown farm, where they still lived, and milked 40 cows, Mim had become a full-fledged dairy farmer.

"You learn to adjust to what you're doing and you learn to like it," Mim said of the daily commitment of milking cows. "The milking scheduled tied me down, but I liked the challenge of working with a registered herd."

Mim also appreciated that their three children could work together on the farm. The children, now adults, showed cows through 4-H. The Kauffmans' herd became most newsworthy when their Cinderella cow won an honorable mention at the All-American Dairy Show in 1976.

Mim got her start in county

dairy promotion before PDPPS was established about 28 years ago. The history of the dairy princess program dates back to 1956, when the Miss Milk Maid Contest was initiated by the Pennsylvania Association of Milk Dealers. For 10 years, that program remained in effect, but in 1967, no contest was held. In 1968, the Pennsylvania Holstein Association assumed responsibility for the program and later the Atlantic Dairy Association.

In 1972, the Kauffmans' daughter Sue was crowned Pennsylvania Alternate Dairy Princess.

But, it wasn't until 1976, that Mim became involved with promotion on the state level. That was the year she was asked to provide a home for the state dairy princess, who was employed by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. The Somerset County dairy princess lived with the Kauffmans and commuted to Harrisburg.

The next year, Mim became affiliated with the state dairy princess program and since then has held six positions within the program.

Mim said that PDPPS was established in 1983 to provide a more uniform program. It is supported by numerous dairy organizations. The primary function is to work with county dairy promotional efforts and dairy princess programs and to plan the state pageant.

In her years with dairy promotion, Mim said that the dairy princess program has changed a lot. "The girls (dairy princesses) are much more knowledgeable about the dairy industry and they work much harder," she said.

Although the opportunities for promoting dairy products are endless, Mim said that they do not want the dairy princess role to hinder the girls' school work. Some girls can handle more work than others and the program strives to adapt to the reigning princess' schedule.

"I wish we (PAPPS) could get across to potential candidates the advantages and all that can be learned in one year," Mim said.

Information is crammed into a three-day training seminar in which each dairy princess must participate during July. Intensive instruction is given on the dairy industry, nutrition, public speaking, poise, make-up, and working with the media. (Turn to Page B34)



Like this spot on the Kauffman's patio, delightful touches of flowers, color, and design are evident inside and outside Mim's home.

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