

Rohrer Family Dairy Farm

(Continued from Page A38)
 operation has always been to make milk and sell milk, Rohrer said.
 The amount of milk per man, per year — which is a measure of the cash-flow success of an

operation — had been more than 1 million pounds with 380 head, according to Robert Sr.
 He said Penn State University economists had advised that
 (Turn to Page A43)



Robert Rohrer Sr. surveys the holding area of his new double-20 milking parlor. The aisle immediately in front of Rohrer is a catch aisle for cows needing treatment or artificial insemination. A head lock is located near the door, at the end of the aisle in which Rohrer stands. At that door is the medical storage area, with its refrigerator, shelves, computer terminal, breeding wheel, and semen storage. The screening is a one-inch square plastic mesh that Rohrer said should last for some time. With the freestall end doors closed, the entire freestall and parlor complex becomes bird-proof.



The computer terminal at the far end of the desk is linked to a main computer located in the main office at the front of the parlor where an Agri-Comp system is used. While still relying on a breeding wheel, the transition is being made to all computer-use. As cows cycle through on the wheel, the information is recorded on the computer and retired from the wheel.



Robert Rohrer Sr. uses a front-end loader outfitted with a rubber-tipped scraper to push feed back into the feed bunk so the cows can get to it. The swinging, electrified central gates move out of the way for the vehicle, while preventing cow movement out of the central traffic aisle in the six-row, 569 free-stall building. An offset, open vent ridge and sunlight panels are aspects of the roof that Rohrer opted to use. There are vertical poles located intermittently along the lip and the length of the free-stall's feed bunk. Eventually, if warranted, the poles are to be used to support a sprinkler and fan cooling system.



This traffic aisle and the animal flooring of the free-stall building are floored with slatted, precast cement panels which allows manure and urine to pass through to a two-million gallon holding area beneath the building. Actually, there are two 1 million gallon holding areas, running parallel and 12 pumpout valves. The center feeding aisle in the building is a solid divider between the two lengthwise holding pits.



Looking back to the farmhouse from the parlor entrance, to the right of the barn and two silos is the implement shed, the first building to go up under the recently completed renovation of the Rohrer family farm. The ATV in the foreground, saves time and energy moving between areas on the large farming operation.