

Mother's Advice

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The two steers, bottled from four days old, are raised for meat purposes only. Jessica would like to get a 4-H steer for showing, but that would require a better trailer for hauling.

Jessica and her mother plan to enlarge and improve the flock through breeding.

"The show string needs to be top quality sheep to make a name for yourself," said Lauria, who is mapping out a plan to attend larger shows. Jessica shows her sheep under the name Susquehannoch Farm — Jessica Schmidt.

"You really don't know how well you're doing just by showing in local fairs, she said. You must go to bigger shows. At Keystone International Livestock Exposition, Jessica placed eighth out of 20.

"That was a cheap lamb," she said. "I bought a good one for Farm Show."

With the sheep bred on the farm,

the Schmidts have not had any birthing problems.

Each one is named and pampered by Jessica who said that each one has its own personality. She finds it difficult to sell market lambs.

The money is used to purchase supplies and equipment and a portion stashed away for a college fund even though Jessica is only a sixth grade student at Swift Middle School. John is a fourth grader at Clermont Elementary.

It isn't just showing sheep that Jessica enjoys. Almost against her wishes, she won the blocking and fitting contest at Lampeter Fair this year.

Jessica said that she had wanted to do a good job in blocking and fitting but she really did not want to win because that would eliminate her from next year's competition when she wanted to enter again with some of her friends.

Despite the drawback of being eliminated from next year's com-

petition, Jessica accepted the first-place ribbon with pride.

Lauria's only experience in caring for animals was with horses during her growing up years. Now she pours over books about the breed that interests her and bombards extension agents with questions.

"I spent hours on the phone with Nancy Frey, a 4-H sheep leader, asking about feeds," Lauria said. "If you don't know something, 4-H families are always willing to share information."

Lauria had a difficult time finding a vet who knew a lot about sheep. Most, she said, don't want to bother with sheep.

The Schmidts are thrilled with the veterinarian services of Nancy Winning. In addition to coming whenever needed, she has also taken the time to meet with 4-H groups and demonstrate an ultrasound machine on sheep.

Lauria, who confesses to becoming attached to any and all animals, seems to have a per-chance for picking up an odd assortment in round-about ways. She finds fairs exciting and is always eager to load the show animals in a homemade trailer and head for another fair.

Her husband Pete, she says, likes to lean on the fence and look at the animals. Although he isn't enthusiastic about the fairs, he puts up with the commotion caused by the children attending six each year.

Jessica said that kids can't be



Even sheep enjoy pumpkin feasts this time of the year. Many stores discard pumpkins after Halloween. A truckload of these discarded pumpkins are just what the sheep and the pigs enjoy.



Jessica wins first place in the blocking and fitting contest at Lampeter Fair.

successful in showing animals without help from parents.

"If my mom wouldn't have made me get up and try again when I wanted to quit, look what I would have missed," she said.

Lauria said, "As a parent, it is

always difficult to know exactly where to draw the line between encouraging your child to persevere or pushing them too hard. I'm glad, in this case, I made the right decision."



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