

# in Directors Reelected

Quaker Farm Astrojet Sue, 3-03, 30,178M, 1,013F, 915P.

County three-yr. old second place winner for milk, fat and protein was Lauren Lynch's Lynholm L Dixiecrat Angie at 3-00, 29,325M, 969F, 910P.

County four-yr. old winner for milk and protein, and second place fat was Hill-A-Way Heiden Ariel,

owned by Desirae Hillegass at 4-07, 28,808M, 971F, 849P.

She also owned the first place four-yr. old winner for fat and second place winner in four-yr. old for milk and protein, with Miss Hill-A-Way Elvan Kayla, at 4-02, 27,486M, 1,022F, 845P.

Five yr. old and over winner for milk, fat and protein was Berline

Mars Tony Belle at 9-03, 27,693M, 1,057F, 887P. Owner is Donna Philipp.

Scott Ream's five-yr. old, Dividing-Ridge Chairman Ireney was second with milk at 25,735M.

Five-yr. old and over second place winner for fat and protein was Andy Lynch's Lynholm Enchantment Louella, 1,024F,

864P.

As president of the Junior Holstein Club, Miller's job included capsulating the year's events. However, the naturally winsome young man's engaging delivery had the guests roaring with delight. Few seemed to care what he said, because they got lost in how he said it.

Lewis and Barbara Berkley, Berlin, are on the committee planning the 1995 National Holstein Convention slated for Pittsburgh. "I guarantee it will be a showcase sale, not only for Pennsylvania, but for the United States," stated Berkley in urging attendance from the Somerset Co. Holstein Club members.

## No Worry About Excess Soil Moisture On Berks Conservation Farm

ANDY ANDREWS  
Lancaster Farming Staff

MECKVILLE (Berks Co.) — Glenn and Karen Musser and family consider themselves more fortunate than others who may face catastrophic losses of farmland because of melting snow and rain in the southeastern portion of the state.

In some places on the drive through Lebanon County (which borders their land), some say it looks like a miniature Minnesota, a land labeled for its lakes.

Areas are so wet that, in some spots, corn crops won't go in this year.

But for the Mussers, dairy farmers who were recently honored as the Berks County Conservation Farmers of the Year, only a small area on a field is still considerably wet.

At one time, before tiles were installed to take care of the water, soil moisture may have been a big concern. But since the installation of more than 13,000 feet of tiles, the Mussers are breathing a sigh of relief that, soon, planting can get under way.

Glenn, who farms with wife Karen and sons Gary, 6 and Travis, 3, moved to the farm in 1989. In 1992, the Mussers signed up with the district to have conservation practices placed on the farm.

In the spring of 1992, the Mussers installed a circular concrete manure storage structure with a capacity of 300,000 gallons. Then, with help from ASCS, strips and contours were laid out according to a plan to reduce soil erosion and to allow the fertile valleys to remain profitable.

"When we first moved up here, there were only one or two fields that were farmed the past year,"

said Glenn, who, with the help from his father, Rufus, purchased the farm. "The rest were just left go."

Rufus moldboard-plowed the land in the winter, so much of it was ready for planting in the spring.

Musser quickly adopted a plan to use minimum tillage and some no-till on the land. The minimum tillage involves chisel plowing and discing.

Musser raises about 160 acres of crops, including about 60 acres of hay, 90 acres of corn, and about 10 acres of soybeans. He uses a cover crop on some of the corn — about 25 acres — which is used as a forage in the spring. The rest is disced under to contribute to the fertilization and organic buildup of the soil.

Musser no-tills about 20 acres.

The dairyman said it "took a year or two before we had it down. And we're still learning a lot."

"We're doing quite a bit of strip-cropping now and we still have a few waterways to put in," he said.

When he began working the land, there were a lot of "obnoxious" weeds, he said. Included were Johnsongrass and some other troublesome weeds, "which we're still dealing with. You can't get rid of that in two years."

They also installed some contouring, which includes about 30 acres to keep erosion down. Fortunately, the remainder of the tillable land is flat enough that only strips are needed (about 90 acres altogether).

For the dairy farmers, the winter was nothing if not trying. They did their best to maintain the 68 Holstein cows (58 milking) of 80 percent registered and the rest grade, including 70 head of replacement stock. Fortunately, with help from their township supervisor John Brown, the lanes got plowed in time to move the milk truck in.

The last snowstorm, which dumped more than a foot of snow, the township called the Mussers and asked for the schedule of the milk truck. "(Brown) called up before the snow actually hit, because he wanted to get the schedule so he could get in," said Karen.

The last winter was nothing like the Blizzard of '93, which left many farmers unprepared. At that time, Glenn remembers the cows that had to be held back for two hours of milking before the truck could make it through.

This time, using a V-plow, it took only a short time to open the lane to get the truck in.

Because of the severe cold in mid-January this year, several water troughs in the barn were getting "tacky," or near-frozen, and that caused some problems.

"We were worried that a couple of the calves might freeze," said Karen. "We wrapped them in a blanket."

Karen said that the wind chill that time "seemed colder than when it was 20 or 30 degrees below."

Also, the snow melt on top of the manure storage structure caused it to fill quickly. They were forced to empty the structure because of the extra load.

Glenn credits Dave Yonkers of the ASCS office in Berks County for helping with installing all the conservation practices and for the honor.

"Dave really helped me out," said Musser. "If it wouldn't be for him, I don't think we'd be where we are now."

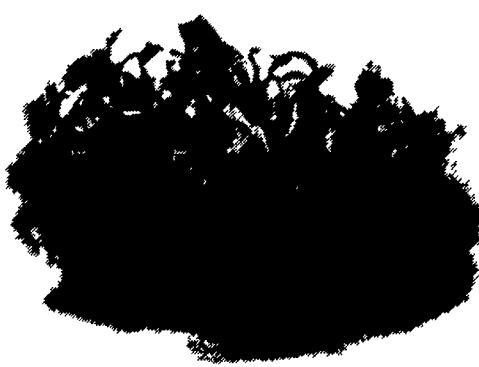
As for the honor, Musser hopes that his experiences can prove valuable to other farmers in dealing with stressful elements such as the weather and the behavior of the soil.

Musser also credits his success in farming to his father, Rufus, who helped him get started in farming. "If it wouldn't be for Dad, I wouldn't be here."

Musser wants to someday merchandise his registered cattle. He has already sold some of his herd to Saudia Arabia and farmers in western Pennsylvania. In addition, during the summer, the dairy farmer does custom round baling for neighbors.

He also has help on the farm from a neighbor, Matthew Bennetch, full-time.

Also, there are other conservation practices Musser wants to install in the future, including "more tiling and waterways," he said.



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