

These Brown Swiss Dairy Farmers Love To Talk Good Cows

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going up. There are quite a number of 30,000 lb. milk, Brown Swiss cows now.

"We only got \$5 for milk at first, but feed was only \$75 a ton. Actually, in the 1970's I could pay the bills better than we can now.

The Dauberts ship milk to Guers Dairy at Tumbling Run. They have high Class 1 utilization and received a recent top price of \$15.50 per hundred.

On the subject of BST, the Dauberts believe you can get more milk out of the cows, but they are not convinced you will make any more money. They say it takes a lot more management, and Dennis sees a big problem in bull proofs.

These bull proofs can be manipulated so badly with BST it's not even funny," Dennis said. "We have talked to people in Ohio who are getting cows to respond with an increase of 10 to 30 pounds of

milk. Herdmate comparisons would be easy to manipulate with BST. Just give the bull's daughters BST and not the herdmates."

William has been a director of the National Brown Swiss Association in the 1980's. Exports from the herd have gone to South America, Mexico and Japan. Five bulls have been purchased or leased to studs.

An on-going embryo flushing program of the best cows con-

tinues. The herd is mostly home-bred, and many animals trace back to three major cow families. But the Dauberts like to buy four or five animals each year to bring new bloodlines into the herd.

Ronald said the genetics base in the Brown Swiss breed is now adequate for good breeding capability. "The smaller genetic base hampered the breed in earlier times," he said. "But in the last 10 years they have been sampling a lot

more young bulls and doing a good job of it, especially in artificial breeding.

"And inquiries from potential buyers continue to create an adequate market for excess breeding animals in the herd. Brown Swiss auctions usually draw good crowds of dairymen, and cows bring good prices."

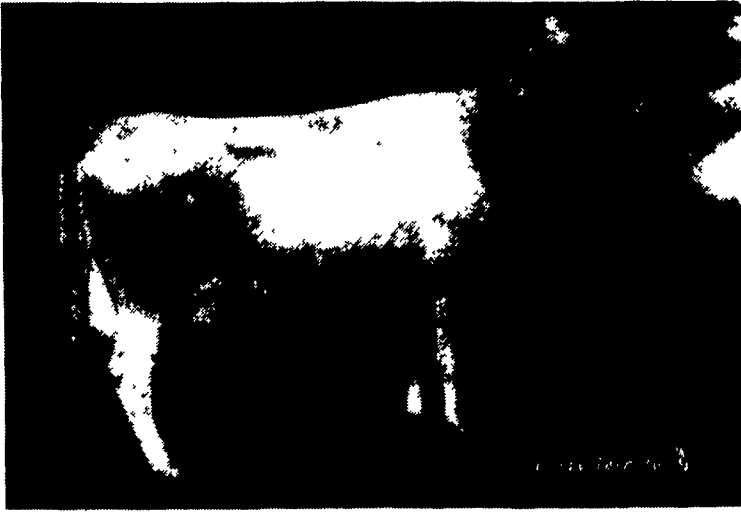
As for the milk and beef check-off money that is taken from their income checks, the Dauberts don't like to give up the money, but they think it is going for a good cause. "I like the commercials and other promotional programs I see," Ronald said. "I think they are doing a good job."

But other overhead costs are not considered so favorably. "The machinery costs are way out of line as far as farming is concerned," William said. "And the young people could make a lot more off the farm.

"The cost of DHIA has gotten out of hand too. You need to sell a few good animals each year to pay for the records.

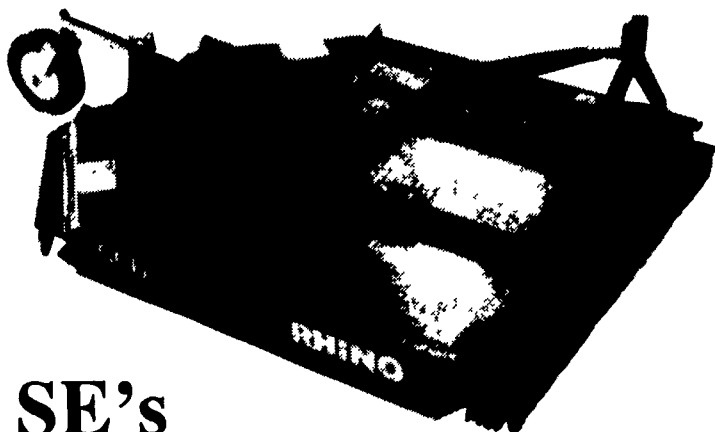


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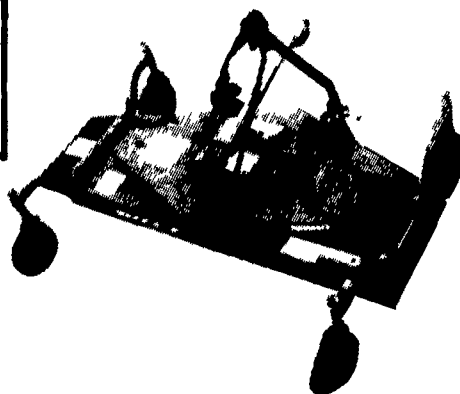
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"Many young farmers farm by choice. But without family help, no way can a young person borrow enough money to start farming today. With the interest and down payment on a \$400,000 farm and the machinery and cow cost, no young person has that much money," William said.

"In the valley out our way, five or six farms are now being turned over to the next generation. They are the survivors. The little farms have already gone out of the dairy business, and the larger farmers rent the land."

Dennis served 10 years as a director of Pennsylvania DHIA. This year the state association changed the district lines, and Dennis and Don Duncan would both have been up for election.

"I choose not to run," Dennis said. I had 10 years, and I wanted to give someone else a chance. I think everyone who has a chance to be a director should do it. That way some of the questions about why things cost so much and why they are run the way they are will be answered."

Dennis also thinks Dave Slusser, the new state association general manager, will do a good job to keep DHIA in Pennsylvania, but he has his work cut out for him.

Asked about the reasons for their success, the Dauberts pause and reflect for a moment before answering. Then William speaks first.

"If we are successful, and I'm not sure you would call it success, the reason would be because we are blessed. When my wife and I sit

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