

Home on Rose-Edge Farm, occupied by Steve and Barbara (Graham) Wilson.



Steve and Barb Wilson's son, David, scrapes the walkway behind the cows on Rose-Edge Farm in Port Royal.

Farmer's Daughter Returns Home To Rose-Edge Farm

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breakthrough to first place. The last year that Barb's dad farmed there, he won the award for pounds of milk, but fat content was on the plaque instead of protein. The

award changed in 1990 from fat to protein.

The Wilsons have 38 heifers and 38 milk cows. They use artificial insemination and also do embryo transfer to breed the cows. In their herd they have two sister cows

that are on the National Holstein Association's Locator List for Production. Every seven to fourteen months the herd is classified.

Rose-Edge Pontiac Nicki is scored Ex-90 for type. They use her for embryo transfer. She has four calves and one heifer. One of the calves and the heifer are her natural calves, and three were carried by other cows. They are still implanting some of her embryos and also have sold some.

The Wilsons utilize the red book published by the Holstein Association on the rating of bulls to help them make mating decisions for their cows. Such classifying is important and is given consideration by a prospective buyer of a calf or of embryo. The artificial inseminator co-ops require at least a very good classification to accept bulls into their lineup.

Steve and Barb grow corn and alfalfa and have a silo for haylage and one for corn. They use a totally mixed ration (TMR), working with a nutritionist who advises them on the corn, haylage, soybeans, vitamins, minerals, etc., used in the TMR. Since cows are known for being good "sorters", Barb said that it is very important to have all thoroughly mixed together or the cows will "sort out" the ingredients they like best.

All of the cows get a TMR. Also fed is a topdress, of which the top-level cows get more with the amount being decreased for each cow in accordance with its production. The nutritionist receives their DHIA reports and forage tests and then decides what they need in the feed and sends them a computer printout. So far they do not have a computer in their operations.

The Wilsons shred newspapers for bedding for the cows in the barn and use sawdust for the heifers and straw for the baby calves. They have been using shredded newspapers for four years. Newspaper makes excellent bedding and dissolves easily in the manure spread on their fields.

In addition to being in on all of the farming operations, of course Barb is a homemaker and a mother. She puts out a garden but grows mostly tomatoes because there is not time to take care of a complete garden. Since her parents live nearby in a home built on some of the farmland after their retirement, Barb and her mother get together to can vegetables and peaches.

Barb's father, Jim, still comes each morning to help with chores while Barb goes into the house to get David ready for school. Then Jim leaves to drive school bus. Because it was one of the first days they were able to get into the fields after a wet spring, Jim had returned to spread manure while the Wilsons were taking time to give the interview for this story. Like many farmers, he may be retired but still likes to be a part of the farm life.

And, oh yes, seven-year-old David Wilson has his chores to do regularly on Saturdays and in the summer. He cleans troughs, sweeps scattered feed away from the cows, feeds the heifers their hay, and takes milk and grain to the calves.

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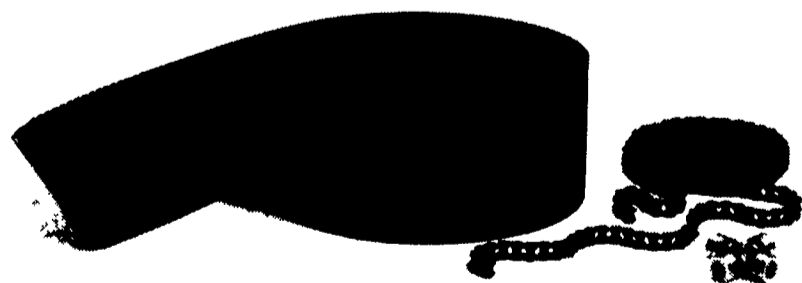
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