

Family And Farming Synonymous At Maple Lawn

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"We have it so that one person can operate it," Iager said. "It takes one person about three and a half hours to milk 175 cows."

After milking, the cows are released in groups of nine, with access to nine computer feeders. Each of the 175 milking cows has a transponder on her neck with a computer chip inside. A computer in the office has programmed each cow individually, and a computer read-out in the office each morning at 9 a.m. tells the Iagers exactly what each cow has eaten the previous day.

"For example if you want the number 10 cow to have 12 pounds, she can have three pounds every six hours," Iager said. "She can't have all 12 pounds at once, but she can eat three pounds every six hours to consume her 12 pounds."

As a cow walks into a stall with a computer feeder the computer reads her chip. There is a click and the sound of the 20 percent protein concentrate being dropped into the feeder.

After they have visited the computer feeders the cows can feed on a total mixed ration (TMR) which is set for about 75 pounds per cow per production. "Any (cows) that produced over 75 pounds we supplement on the computer feeder," Iager said.

A nutritionist from Wilson Enterprises in West Virginia visits Maple Lawn Farm every six

weeks to balance the ration with the ingredients the Iagers have on hand, to save cost and give Maple Lawn Farm the highest milk production possible.

"They take samples of the corn silage, alfalfa haylage and hay to check the protein and moisture content," Iager said. "You want your TMR to have 50 percent protein all the time. We use alfalfa hay, alfalfa haylage and corn silage, roasted beans and corn." These are all products raised on Iager's farm. They also purchase vitamins and minerals, beet pulp and cottonseed to add to the TMR. Then it is mixed in a mixer with built-in scales and served to the cows just outside of the milking parlor. With one bite the cow has a balanced feed to be metabolized. Charles Iager compares free feeding to going to a cafeteria and eating just the things we like instead of the things that are good for us.

Maple Lawn Farm maintains a rolling herd average of about 22,000 milk/3.6 percent fat, and 3.2 percent protein. After classifying just weeks ago, they have an unofficial BAA of 104.8. Two hired hands help them on the farm.

"We've had a bunch of high production cows," says Mr. Iager. "But our goal has always been to have a 300,000-pound cow. We haven't yet. We have had a couple dozen over 200,000 and lots over 150,000 though. The top production was about 40,000 with 1,200 to 1,300 pounds of fat." Maple

Lawn Farm's highest classified animal was a 96-point cow named Maryland Maple Lawn Marquis Glamour. They sold her for \$1,500 to help pay for their milking parlor, then she was resold for almost \$70,000. One of that cow's offspring later sold for over a million dollars in Wisconsin.

Judy Iager says they are lucky to have three boys who are interested in the farm and have been very willing to help over the years. "All the different things they can do they have tried hard to do and have done it," she says. All three sons, Michael, Matt and Mark have gone to National 4-H Club Congress just as their father did when he was young. Michael and Matt have gone to National Holstein Conventions as distinguished juniors from Maryland. Mark is set to go this year. Michael was the first president of the Maryland Junior Holstein Association in 1987. Michael attended the University of Maryland. Matt is a graduate of Delaware Valley College and is currently in his second year of vet school at Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinarian Medicine at Virginia Tech. Mark graduates from high school this year. So the tradition of educated farming at Maple Lawn Farm continues.

As president of the Maryland Holstein Association, Charles Iager says his long-term goal is to organize a workshop at a farm. "Maybe for next year," he says, "where all the 700 membership could go to a modern farm and look at their operation. While there, we could have exhibitors demonstrate the latest, up-to-date things that a dairyman can learn about TMR, milkers, ultrasound pregnancy tests or sexing eggs. Maybe someone from the DHIA could come in and explain how to understand their sheets and answer questions related to the red book or the sire summary that comes out twice a year. We could find out about the newest ways to register cows and we might even have a judging school for those who want to be on the judging list. It could be an all-day thing with a fun meal and an educational set-up with adults and kids welcome. Doing all these things could help the farmer become more efficient, make money and maybe pick up a few things about farming."

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LOIS SZYMANSKI
Maryland Correspondent

Lois Szymanski lived on a farm in Warfordsburg, Pennsylvania, when she was young. She is now a free-lance writer who specializes in writing for children, both in the magazine markets and novels about horses for young readers. AVON Books has published her book, PATCHES AND A NEW KIND OF MAGIC. Her next book, ICICLE, is due to be released in March of 1995.

She lives in Westminster, Maryland, with her husband Dan and two children, Shannon and Ashley. They have two ponies, twenty French Lop show rabbits, a cat, and a dog. Lois enjoys getting to know local farmers through the features she writes for *Lancaster Farming*.



Lois Szymanski



Judy Iager with the cows at feeding time.

Maryland Holstein Picnic Set For June 26 At Maple Lawn Farm

The Maryland Holstein picnic is scheduled to be held at Maple Lawn Farm on Sunday June 26. The Iagers wrote this note to cordially extend a special invitation to all members, juniors and adults, to come.

There will be tours, swimming, games and a picnic starting at 11 a.m. and continuing as long as desired. Fried chicken and drinks will be provided. Each family should bring lawn chairs and a covered dish to share.

To get to the farm follow these directions:
From Baltimore: 1 mile West

of Route 29 on Route 216. 4 miles West of I-95, take Scaggsville/Route 216 West exit.

From Frederick: take Route 70 East towards Baltimore. (Immediately past Howard Co. Fairgrounds, which you see from 70,) take Route 32 towards Clarksville. Go right on Route 108 for 2 miles. Go left on Route 216 at light at Highland for 2 miles. Farm on left.

For questions or comments, call: Charles & Judy, (301) 725-6751; Gene & Kathy, (301) 725-8387; Mike & Heather, (301) 725-4611; Farm, (301) 725-2074.



Michael Iager works in the new milking parlor.



Mark Iager bottle feeds a calf.