

Campbell Brothers Combine Show Type With Dairy Management

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(Part 2 of 2)

FORD CITY (Armstrong Co.) — The grand champion and the junior champion Holsteins of the Pennsylvania Fall Championship Show were both owned by syndicates involving dairymen Mark and David Campbell.

Those two registered Holsteins — 5-year-old Wind-Drift A-J Natema, and senior calf Don-Ton Chaos Beauty — are kept at the Campbell's 300-acre farm, which is tucked in a hilly area about three miles from downtown Ford City.

It is a somewhat remote area, with hunting cabins speckling the big woods area to the north, a thinner soil that is good for growing about four cuttings of hay, but dependent on well-timed rainfall for good corn production.

It is the home farm of the brothers, the place where they were born and grew up with their 4-H dairy projects on their father's dairy farm. It is now the place they live and milk about 68 registered Holsteins to support their families, and their children.

Showing the champion Holsteins in a state show is an accomplishment for the brothers who are involved in the syndicate with fellow dairyman Alex Claypoole and Doug Beatty, whom Mark said is a friend and milk hauler from Lawrence County.

But perhaps more to the point of dairying is the fact that the Campbells have tied with Fantasyland Farm in Berks County for the Pennsylvania Dairy Herd Improvement Association's (Pa.DHIA) top herd management award.

The award is presented annually to the top finalist in a contest that awards points to various aspects of dairy herd management, with an emphasis on increased average milk production per cow. Significant production increases for an entire herd is an indicator that management for a wide variety of dairy cattle concerns.

The award formula also takes into account all the important management concerns.

While Armstrong County doesn't have many dairy operations, in comparison to other counties, the Campbell's 1993 end-of-year production was 23,211 pounds of milk, ranking them second in the county.

In one year, the Campbells increased the average milk production of their herd to 27,509 pounds of milk, 926 pounds of fat, and 877 pounds of protein. The herd now not only has the top herd in the county for production averages, but the fourth highest averaging, milk-producing herd the state.

It wasn't anything spectacular that gained them the extra milk production, but more of a concentrated effort to increase the average, according to Mark.

"We've concentrated on production a little more, and fed them a little better," Mark said. "We did it mostly to increase cash flow."

A local nutritionist helps them formulate the rations of separately fed grain, hay, and haylage and silage, he said.

"We feed grain four times per day, silage three times, and hay three or four times," Mark said, adding that the hay is mostly grass hay or mixed alfalfa.

The have two silos — one for corn silage, and the other for haylage.

★ AMERICAN DAIRY SHOW



Bob Morrell is at the halter of the junior champion of the Pa. Holstein Fall Championship Show, while syndicate partners Mark Campbell — who holds daughter Sarah and has his arm on daughter Rachel — and Doug Beatty — who holds daughter Lindsey — stand next to their winner. Don Eaton, breeder of the heifer, stands in back of Campbell and Beatty. The champion is kept at the farm of Mark and David Campbell who are winners of the state Pa.DHIA herd management award.

They do not use a totally mixed ration, which has been a method of feeding which generally has resulted in increased production, compared to feeding forages and grains separately.

The farm has a lot of pasture, Mark said, and the cows are milked in a 50-tie stall bank barn twice a day. The bank barn is an old one, with a 60-foot, one-story addition built in 1972. The dry cows have their own barn, and the heifers are kept in another bank barn.

"Our main thing on managing is cow health," Mark said. "We're pretty fussy about animal health. We're on a good herd health program and try to make as good of feed as we can."

Mark said that compared to some recommendations that have come along in recent years, he and his brother don't push the high producing cows as hard as some might.

"On good heavy producers, I like to have them dry three or four months. A lot of people wouldn't agree with that," Mark said. He said he feels it is justified because, "It seems to give them a good enough time to recuperate and get back in shape." At the same time, he said, "We'll run some of those through a longer lactation."

As part of their herd health program, care of feet and legs is also key. The entire herd gets hooves trimmed at least once a year, and the trimmer is used during the year to take care of subgroups of cows in the herd, as needed.

The management decisions also include bedding with chopped straw, daily hauling of manure, with a temporary stacking pad for use during winter or when it's not otherwise feasible.

The Campbells raise the majority of their heifer calves, unless they are sold as breeding stock. They also raise some of their own bulls for cleanup, mostly on heifers.

The calves are raised in individual hutches first, then moved

through a series of grouping pens, as is the current industry experts recommend.

Mark said his wife Donna feeds the calves, they use maternity pens for the cows, and they place high importance on getting colostrum into the newborns in time to utilize its benefits for health.

While their champions were purchased through the cooperative efforts of a syndicate of friends, the Campbell's breeding strategy focuses on using a lot of Canadian influence.

The Natema cow — last scored as a Very Good 88, but due to be reclassified in December — has finished a 305-day lactation started at 5 years of age, made 30,894 pounds, made a 990 pounds of fat, and 944 pounds of protein.

Mark said that while flushing her in the future for embryo transfer work hasn't been ruled out, she has been bred back to Roundale Stardust, a Canadian bull, and should freshen again next summer.

He did say that they do intend to use her genetics to improve their own herd.

However, the herd already is injected with good genetics — at last classification, there 15 Excellents.

The herd is not closed however, and probably will not be, at least for some time, since Mark said that when they see an calf or heifer that they like, and the price is right, they will buy it. Further, he said that he and David haven't made any concrete plans for expansion, but that they may well be adding more to the milking string.

"We've increased herd size in last two years," Mark said, "and we haven't sold as many for dairy purposes as in previous years. We're talking about increasing herd size a little, but not sure."

The milk is marketed to Dean Foods, in Sharon, close to the Pennsylvania-Ohio border.

While the farm is somewhat secluded, it is not unknown. Thanks to marketing genetics, and showing and winning with registered Hols-



From the left, Harvey Clem is the leadman for the grand champion Holstein of the Pa. Fall Championship Show, while Mark Campbell holds the banner and Doug Beatty holds the rosette.

teins, many have discovered its location.

"We've done business with several different counties and a lot of different states," Mark said. "Recently there's been interest in the champion."

Also, there are family concerns.

Mark and Donna have three young children — Mark, 8, and younger sisters, Rachel and Sarah. David Campbell and his wife Audrey have a daughter Alysa.

"The children are not old enough for 4-H yet, but I'm sure that they will be involved," Mark said. He said that while his son

Mark will probably start in 4-H next year, he already has seen some experience in the show ring. "He showed a calf that was junior champion at the Western Pennsylvania (Holstein) Championship, last year."

In fact, family and 4-H had a big role in forming the lives of the Campbells, according to Mark.

"When our dad was with us, and when we were small and in 4-H, he began buying purebreds, and we've had purebreds ever since.* He passed away nine years ago, and my brother and I took over (the farm). He's the one who got us started."

FFA Nominates Redding For Honorary Degree

YORK (York Co.) — Larry R. Redding, agricultural education instructor and FFA advisor at Dover Area High School has been nominated to receive the Honorary American FFA Degree.

Redding was nominated for the degree by the Pennsylvania FFA Association, and the nomination was approved by the National FFA Board of Directors at their recent meeting in Alexandria, Virginia. The Honorary Degree is the highest honorary award presented by the FFA. This year 69 teachers of agricultural education were nominated to receive the degree during the 67th National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, November 10-12, 1994.

Redding has been involved in agricultural education for 17 years. During the first 10 years of his career he taught at Bermudian Springs High School in York Springs, Adams County, from 1987 through 1991 he served as program specialist in agricultural education with the Pennsylvania

Department of Education, and since 1991, has taught agricultural education in the Dover Area School district.

The degree is awarded on the basis of points earned by the teacher for his/her accomplishments as an agricultural instructor, FFA Advisor and participant in professional organizations for agriculture teachers. During the past 17 years, Redding has supervised students who have received the Keystone FFA Degree, Regional Proficiency Awards, The American FFA Degree, Star Agribusinessman Awards, and who have served as Pennsylvania FFA Association Officers. From 1983 through 1987 Redding served as an officer in the Pennsylvania Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association and led the organization as president for the 1986-87 term. At the 1987 American Vocational Conference in Dallas, Texas, he received the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, State Professional Development award.

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