

# Lancaster Holstein Enthusiasts Tour Chester County

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During the Dunwood dispersal, Melvin and Alvin each bought seven head of the herd to start up again.

Alvin said he was planning to build up the herd, when John Stoltzfus, not a family member, saw all the empty stalls and asked if he could bring a couple cows in to be milked and cared for, and he would bring potential buyers.

According to Alvin, John brought seven to eight cows at a time into the herd. "We sold more cows that following year than we did at the sale," he said. "I almost felt like a dealer, and I wanted to be a breeder," Alvin said.

He said people brought in to look at John's animals also got a look at the main herd, and that stimulated additional sales that may never have happened otherwise.

Alvin said that the experience has helped him tremendously in being able to sell and price animals. In fact, he said every cow in the herd has an price established, even if it is not for sale.

Just prior to the tour, Alvin said group of buyers from Brazil had come to see the herd, and after experiencing the sales generated through the arrangement with John Stoltzfus, he said he felt more confident talking with potential buyers.

Alvin said he does buy some calves and will bring them into the herd, with a mind that they be sold later. He said that he buys calves, because the investment is relatively small compared to potential outcome, and even if the calf doesn't pan out, he can still sell her as a milking animal without losing money.

"I do buy calves and seldom a cow. The reason is the heifer barn will hold more than I can milk. When I have extra heifers, it's easier to sell when (buyers) comes in."

Alvin said always having animals for sale helps sell animals. It is a strong marketing tool, adding that during the three years the herd was closed, the traffic of buyers slowed, and sales slowed, even though the quality of cattle remained.

Alvin also reviewed some of the changes implemented on the farm over the years, and how each change resulted in an increase in milk production. For example, he said that in 1981 they incorporated high moisture corn, in 1984 a silo, in 1988 an invitational sale, in 1992 a mixer to make totally mixed rations (TMRs), and last year they had the barn outfitted with a tunnel ventilation system.

"The point is we keep doing things very carefully and our production responds. (With each change) Every time the production increased," Alvin said. "Right now, I don't know how we got along without tunnel ventilation."

Alvin said he has been using a similar breeding strategy to that of his father's, called the "AAA" system which rates types.

"We breed back and forth, and shoot for the center or balance, when mating. Helps to use the top TPI bulls without seeing the daughters," Alvin said, explaining that saleability of offspring is the reason for using the top 15 TPI bulls.

Alvin also keeps some bulls at the farm sometimes for bull studs. During the tour had two housed there, one with awaiting a proof and the other being looked at by a bull stud.

Something else unique about Dunwood is that they are currently involved in an experiment with a device that its attached to the milking unit that is to test milk and tell whether or not the cow is cycling or not.

At another invitational sale at the farm in 1988, at which time Melvin dispersed his herd, there were 60 members of the Golden family included.

Presently, there are about 40 members of the family in the herd, representing the 13th generation at the farm. Of those 40, one was a 3-year-old Southwind daughter that freshened February and is milking about 100 pounds of milk per day.

The herd also included cows such as Cherio, a Tradition daughter out of Dunwood Proud Cherry, that is an Excellent-91 with her last three 365-day lactations at more than 30,000 pounds of milk. On a chart above her stall was posted a 10-10 lactation with 34,194 pounds of milk, and 1,264 pounds



This group of heifers at the Dunwood Farm is kept in loose housing with a clean bedded pack of straw and sawdust.

of butterfat in 365 days.

Melwood Holsteins

The Melwood farm is home for Melvin, his wife Mary Ellen, and their seven children.

After Melvin got back into dairying, he bought some cows from surrounding farms, and got a group from Dunwood. In recognition of his brother's management, Alvin said that he sent a couple of cows over to Melvin that Alvin thought he got to produce about as much as he could.

Under Melvin's program, which is called a type of organic dairying, production increased. Alvin said he intended to use the same type of management at his farm, and in fact hired the consultant that has been working with Melvin in the organic use.

The organic dairying at Melvin's 45-cow operation is based on not using pesticides, and also feeding a TMR with a supplement that includes lacto-bacteria to boost populations in the rumen.

The herd averages 26,278 pounds of milk, 1,038 pounds of fat, and 861 pounds of protein,

with a BAA of 106.

Melvin's herd is genetically sound, with five Blackstar daughters, and five Leadman daughters, including a Leadman from the Cola/Carmel family fresh at 3 years, and milking 143 pounds milk.

In addition, the farm has a "New York" style heifer raising facility.

Currently, the milk is being sold as milk, though the consultant, who was on hand said that organic milk buyers are growing, primarily in the cities. Melvin said he hopes to supply the niche market which pays more for milk.

Melvin said that he has a half dozen cows in his herd that he intends to breed for cow families, while others were brought in for milking.

"Eighteen years ago I started with Dunwood's Cola and a group from Maryland that I paid \$350 each. They really milked. You want to be careful buying high-priced breeding stock," he advised.

Melvin also talked about the Cleitus daughters and the high production he has gotten from them.

## SRBC Holds Hearing, Approves Projects

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Susquehanna River Basin Commission held its bi-monthly meeting on March 9 at the Radisson-Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center, Camp Hill.

In addition to regular business activities, the Commission held a final public hearing on the non-consumptive use portion of the omnibus package of regulatory revisions, a rule making action of the Commission that has been pending since May 1994.

After reviewing the comments received at this hearing, the Commission will consider adoption of the non-consumptive use package at its May 1995 meeting.

Eight previous public hearings were held on the package during June and July of 1994. As a result of comments received at those hearings, the Commission decided to defer action on the portion of the proposed rules dealing with the consumptive use of water. The existing consumptive use regula-

tion, found at 18 CFR §803.61, will be retained and a suspension of that regulation for agriculture will remain in effect.

supporting full funding of the Susquehanna River Basin Flood Forecast and Warning System often referred to as the "Susquehanna Initiative." The President's proposed budget contains \$669,000 for the system, but about \$1.3 million will be needed to maintain the system's viability.

The Commission also approved an application of J. Makowski Associates, Inc. for a natural gas storage project near Avoca, N.Y. The project will draw three million gallons per day (mgd) from ground water which will be used to solution-mine gas storage chambers from underlying salt formations.

As a condition of approval, the Commission imposed pumping restrictions to protect local streams during periods of low flow and other restrictions to protect existing well owners.

Other projects approved by the

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tion, found at 18 CFR §803.61, will be retained and a suspension of that regulation for agriculture will remain in effect.

The rule making package implements a number of much needed administrative and organizational improvements.

The package also contains new requirements for approval of new surface water takings in excess of 100,000 gpd and registration of water withdrawals in excess of 10,000 gpd.

Special efforts will be made during the next two months to work with the New York State Farm Bureau on its objections to the registration requirements.

In other meeting action, the Commission adopted a resolution

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