

Breeding, Feeding Pays Off

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V I N C E N T O W N ,
N.J. — There are many things which can create excitement in farming, but nothing quite like seeing unexpectedly outstanding performance by a farm-raised animal. Recently, a New Jersey dairy farmer and his herdsman have been getting excited about some high milk production coming from one of their farm's registered Holsteins.

Clint Shontz, of Vincentown, N.J., lives and works on a 120-acre dairy farm owned by his father, C. Wayne Shontz. Clint owns 57 milking cows out of the 220-head milking herd he manages and milks with the help of hired man Chris Kleingunther.

What has been causing excitement at the farm is the promisingly high production by one of Clint's registered Holsteins — a red and

white genetic carrier which haven't been renowned for high production compared to the rest of the breed.

According to Shontz, his just-turned 6-year-old Shayne Shamrock, an 86-point Cleitus daughter, tested for 179 pounds milk production on the 30th day after freshening. At 65 days, she made 176 pounds of milk.

"I think she's milking more now," said Clint, a 1993 dairy science graduate from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Clint said she made more than 100,000 pounds of milk in two, extended lactations. As a 2-year-old, she made 29,000 pounds milk, and 35,000 pounds as a 3-year-old.

According to Clint, while injectable, recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST) is used on some animals in the 220-head milking string, he hasn't used it on

Shamrock.

He said that, first of all, "She's just fresh and she's milking a lot." He also said that she slipped too much body score naturally to push her production any more than it is.

Shontz said that, unfortunately, Shamrock suffered a recent brief bout of mastitis in a quarter and her production dropped slightly. Shontz said he treated her for mastitis and has been feeding most of the calves with milk from Shamrock.

While the mastitis is apparently under control, Shamrock is a big cow, Shontz said, and he worries sometimes about her moving around in the freestalls. He estimated her weight at around 1,800 pounds, though he said he hasn't measured her.

She has two daughters, one milking, Beattyview Mark Ryan, that he said has had a couple of tests of more than 95 pounds per

day as a 2-year-old.

That fact that her daughter is doing well, and she is testing at 3.5 percent protein, he said her index ought to improve. He said he intends to have her rescored and some photographs taken.

"I really excited ... the next highest testing cow (to Shamrock) is 120 (pounds), and the herd average was 65 pounds that day (her second test of the current lactation), so she is actually three times the average of herd," he said.

Shamrock's dam was an Enhancer daughter that Shontz said was a 100,000 pound cow, "though she never made any super records, but a lot of milk."

The grandam was a red carrier, a Lilly Pond Distinctive Red daughter. Clint said he bought Shamrock's dam in 1986 for about \$1,500 during the New Jersey State Calf sale.

Shontz does all sire selections and does all the artificial insemination work on the farm. He also par-

ticipates in an A.I. company's young sire program.

He said he had flushed Shamrock to a red bull, but did not get any red calves.

The farm's herd has about a 20,000 pound rolling herd average, and though it consists mostly of Holsteins, it is colorful, with some Brown Swiss and Jerseys. Also, about 75 percent of the Holsteins carry the red genetic factor, and of those, about a third exhibit the coloration.

Also, about 60 percent of the herd is registered, Shontz said.

Clint said he feeds a totally mixed ration made mostly with grains and forages raised on the farm and the additional rented land. They raise and store high moisture corn, corn silage, alfalfa, and oatlage taken off in the spring as a winter cover crop on corn. The fields are planted to alfalfa and corn basically on a three-year rotation, and Clint does a lot of field work in addition to managing the herd.

The TMR also uses purchased concentrates and commodities, such as soybean meal, or protein meal.

Clint does the ration formulations, using a computer program he got at college, plus a record system he described as "homespun."

The herd is on a regular monthly pregnancy checks by a veterinarian and basically has the herd on a regular herd health program, with the vet doing general herd health checks.

Shontz said that while he doesn't do formal body scores, he does mental body scores, especially on those at freshening, and at other points in a dairy cow's life's subcycles.

Shontz milks out of a double-six herringbone parlor and, a member of Atlantic Dairy Cooperative, ships about 24,000 pounds of milk every two days.

The herd is on test and he said he uses the records.

Shamrock has the potential to become a very important contributor to the future generations of animals at the Shontz farm.

While an earlier flush to a red bull unfortunately resulted in no heifer calves, Clint said he is planning on doing some flush work on her, possibly to "Elton, maybe Lindy," he said, "and then whichever newer sires are out there now that look good."

While in college, Clint was a member of the dairy club, and a member of the collegiate dairy judging team, that in 1991 won the Jersey competition in Madison, and ranked 10th overall.

Clint said he had showed Shamrock as a heifer, "But I don't bother dragging her around now. She's too busy making milk."

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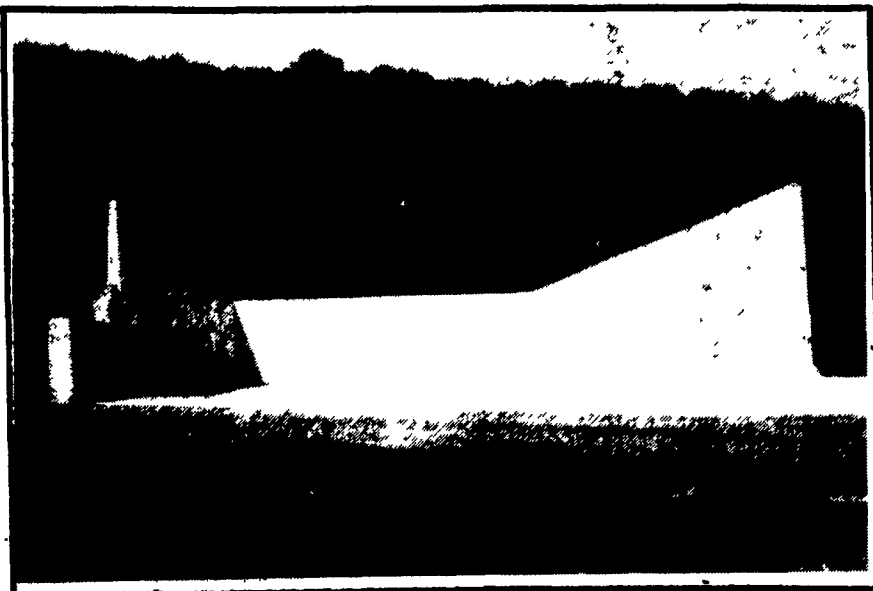
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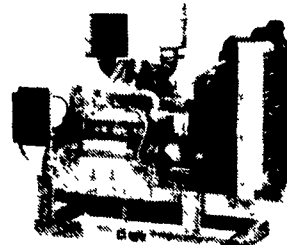
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