

Hickory Hill Farm Back In Dairy Business

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Maryland Correspondent
UPPERCO, Md. — Hickory Hill Farm, Inc. of Upperco, Maryland, is back in business! The milk business that is! The farm went out of the dairy business in 1986 with the dairy termination program, but on April 23 of this year they were back with a 250 head herd of cattle purchased from Delaware's Middessa Farms.

Owned by brothers, Wayne, Frank and John Armacost, sister Carol and mom Ellen, the farm has been in the Armacost family for six generations — over 200 years. "Our farm's original land grant was from the King of England and was made out to Christopher Armacost," says Wayne Armacost. With 375 acres on the family farm, they also farm an additional rented 75 acres, but the crops they raise, (240 acres of corn and 85 acres of soybeans) are strictly for the use of their own cattle. Mr. Armacost stresses that they are focusing on milk production now, not crop farming.

"About 45 percent of our cattle are registered," said Armacost, indicating the Holsteins at rest in the 140-foot by 490-foot barn. All are equipped with transponders to track milk production by computer, and pedometers to track activity and heat cycles for optimum breeding times. There is a 50-foot by 50-foot office and tank room

set-up next to the barn and several exercise lots for the cattle. The concrete floors in the barn are hosed regularly, making for a clean and efficient set-up.

"Although my brother (John) does some machine and equipment repairs, we really are not diversifying," says Wayne Armacost of the farm's goals. "Our main focus at this point is on producing milk. We want to get the herd size back up to about 400 head," he says.

Cows will be artificially inseminated at Hickory Hill Farm. Then, in a special deal, calves born on Hickory Hill Farm will go back to Middessa Farms to be raised before coming home to Hickory Hill Farm again at milking age.

"When we decided to go back into the dairy business, we updated our barns with all new Westphalia milkers (with automatic take-offs)," Armacost says. The milking area is equipped with a Westphalia double 12 parallel, expandable to 16.

Currently, the Armacosts milk 240 cows, twice a day. They feed a total mixed ration that consists of corn silage, hominy, soybean meal, cottonseed, dried brewers, and minerals.

Help on the farm includes Wayne Armacost's immediate family: wife - Pepper, and chil-

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Armacost shows the new milking parlor at Hickory Hill Farm that is equipped with a Westphalia double 12, expandable to 16.



Wayne Armacost in the dairy barns at Hickory Hill Farm, Inc.



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