

Rocky Hollow Farms Is Fifth Generation Dairy

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unhealthy conditions for the animals is key to successful grazing. Mark said grazing has worked well so far, though adding, "We have lots to learn yet." The herd is on official DHIA test and has a rolling herd average of about 19,500 pounds of milk. Mark said his goal is to increase the production per cow, not the number of

cows, at least until the children are grown enough to start considering making an expansion decision. Milking in tie stalls, Mark said he would like the herd production to break the 20,000-pounds of milk average. The operation consists of an old bank barn with a freestall extension, and a new brick milkhouse.

Though shocked and not injured, the new milkhouse was needed after a milk tanker backed into the old milkhouse while Mark was inside. Of the two houses, an older three-story frame farmhouse is where Mark and his family live. A newer stone house with a white, three-rail PVC fence around the

yard is where father and mother Loretta live. Mark said that the family was pleased to receive the Dairy of Distinction honors, though ironically after attending a banquet to receive the award, the farm didn't look as good as before they got the award. Mark said that the weather forecast was good when the family left

the farm to attend the awards banquet. When they returned home, however, they discovered that a storm had ripped through the area and tore off a lot of the roof from the house. He said that night at 2 a.m. he had rain water running into bed.

The roof has since been repaired and the house re-sided. The new roof is green. The house siding white with green trim and green shutters, matching the color scheme of a brand new shop building on the farm.

As with any family farm that has been ongoing for generations, operations change over time and require differing demands on structures.

For the past 10 years, the Sechlers have been dealing with that situation, tearing down old obsolete buildings and putting up newer ones, or modifying existing ones for incorporation into the current operation.

For example, two older poultry buildings were converted to house the farm's calf-raising operations. Mark said he has kept the controlled lighting and fans that controlled the environment for poultry and uses them to the benefit of their replacement calves.

With individual stalls built inside the shell of the poultry buildings, the setup allows for easier and more comfortable feeding and working conditions, as well as a healthier and more consistent environment for the calves. Mark said he knows they have attained a less-than-1-percent calf mortality since the conversion.

Three years ago, the Sechlers built a Virginia-style heifer barn that has made raising animals more efficient and consistent.

Other changes loom. A computer was purchased recently but has not yet been incorporated into the management of the farm. Mark said his children, especially Ryan have been learning about the computer and have been working on it. Eventually, it may get used for farm business.

Earning the Dairy of Distinction Award is an honor, Mark said. He said that keeping the farm looking nice is important to him. "I just like to have a nice place."

The red and white Dairy of Distinction sign hangs from a post along the road in front of the farm along with a sign for Galliker's Dairy, a locally recognizable dairy that receives milk from Rocky Hollow Farms.

MUD 9 GALLIKER'S DAIRY

MERV Dtr: Meadow Breeze Merv Bunkie GR
 2-00 195d 15,749m 2.2% 341f 3.2% 500p Inc.
 Proj 305d 22,952m 449f 731p
 Meadow Breeze Farm, Chalfont, PA

OSCAR Dtr: Century-Oak Oscar Alison, GP-83
 2-0 172d 14,715m 3.1% 462f 2.9% 424p Inc
 Proj 305d 24,618m 749f 702p
 Century Oak Farm, Pottstown, PA

	REF	PLM	TPI		REF	PLM	TPI				
9H1674 BUNKER	+45P	+1096M	80%	+1.75	+1253	9H1489 SLOCUM	+51P	+2007M	84%	+1.72	+1372
9H1672 MERV	+56P	+2088M	83%	+1.71	+1212	9H1475 JAG BI	+44P	+648M	82%	+1.02	+1217
9H1705 HEROD	+43P	+1124M	70%	+1.41	+1227	9H1570 MIKY	+36P	+1802M	82%	+1.83	+1245
9H1698 PUNK	+51P	+1899M	67%	+1.23	+1217	9H1582 IMPULSE	+55P	+1649M	84%	+0.94	+1241
9H1649 MANNIX	+32P	+999M	79%	+2.32	+1180	9H1579 INDY	+40P	+1677M	85%	+1.89	+1225
9H1691 MISTER	+48P	+1097M	80%	+0.72	+1114	9H1620 WHIP	+37P	+979M	83%	+1.42	+1212
9H1270 BOMBER	+43P	+1369M	71%	+1.04	+1110	9H1909 VAVIANO	+45P	+1152M	79%	+1.32	+1191
9H1690 BARNEY	+22P	+576M	73%	+2.38	+1068	9H1644 RUMPSHOT	+52P	+1677M	80%	+1.24	+1181
795 HA and USDA						9H1551 ASPEN	+43P	+1667M	81%	+1.00	+1176
						9H1625 BONSAI	+54P	+1115M	80%	+0.74	+1168
						9H1546 CALVIN	+52P	+1127M	84%	+0.60	+1162
						9H1888 VANQUISH	+40P	+1513M	83%	+1.12	+1161
						9H1289 OSCAR	+50P	+1337M	96%	+0.61	+1126
						9H1833 ENCORE	+23P	+536M	81%	+2.44	+1118
						795 HA and USDA					

Sire Power

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