

Here's How The Dairy Is Equipped

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ping 696 by 100 feet and contains 600 stalls — is cool even when the mercury soars to 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The roof is 12 feet at the eaves and 24 feet at its peak. The wide open ridge vent lets air sweep through.

The building was placed "so that the prevailing winds come this way," Jones said.

The movable stalls average 45 inches for cows and 43 inches for heifers.

All of the cows wear automatic identification and heat seekers on their heels. This saves time by allowing easy sorting for illness, breeding and the foot trimmer, Jones said.

Behind the holding pen in the parlor is a series of large box stalls for "special needs" cows — those about to freshen, the injured and down animals. The special needs animals have their own small pasture between the two buildings.

The Joneses have about 1,105 dry cows and bred heifers — nearly half of which are of milking age.

The youngest heifers live in small, partitioned groups in a counterslope barn — an idea suggested by Jones' veterinarian.

The barn is built on a slight angle so that manure runs down to the slatted floor and into the underground manure system. No bedding is necessary. And the heifers seem quite content, Jones said. The youngest heifers are fed a special ration.

As they grow older, the heifer groups are moved to a larger heifer shed. These older stock are fed the leftovers TMR that the milk cows get — a large cost savings on feed, Jones said.

Calves live in a 120-stall calf shed. Partitions between each stall

can be removed for easy clean-up. The calves are fed off a specially equipped cart that has its own tank of milk.

The farm has an extensive stormwater management and underground drainage system to handle run-off.

Jones Farm Open

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said. Just when the cows were starting to recover, the heat wave hit.

The first few weeks after the move, it was all the family could do to get the cows into the parallel parlor. The Joneses had a herringbone parlor at their previous farm.

"The cows would walk in, but they wouldn't turn," Sean said. "We had to physically turn each cow. It was terrible. We started to wonder if we made the right decision."

There were also some problems with the gravity flow manure system, though those seem to have been remedied now.

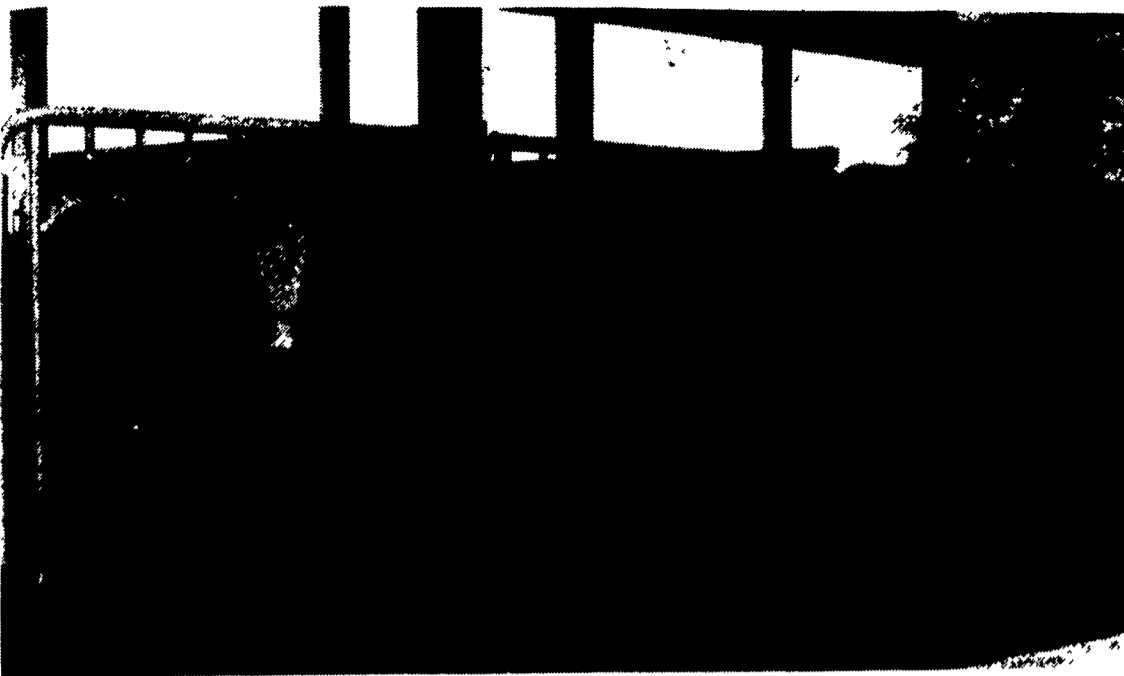
Learning how to farm on Kent County's dry ground has been an experience, too.

But the design of the complex is proving itself efficient. And the location of the farm — well away from neighbors who might be offended by the odors of dairying — has been a real boon.

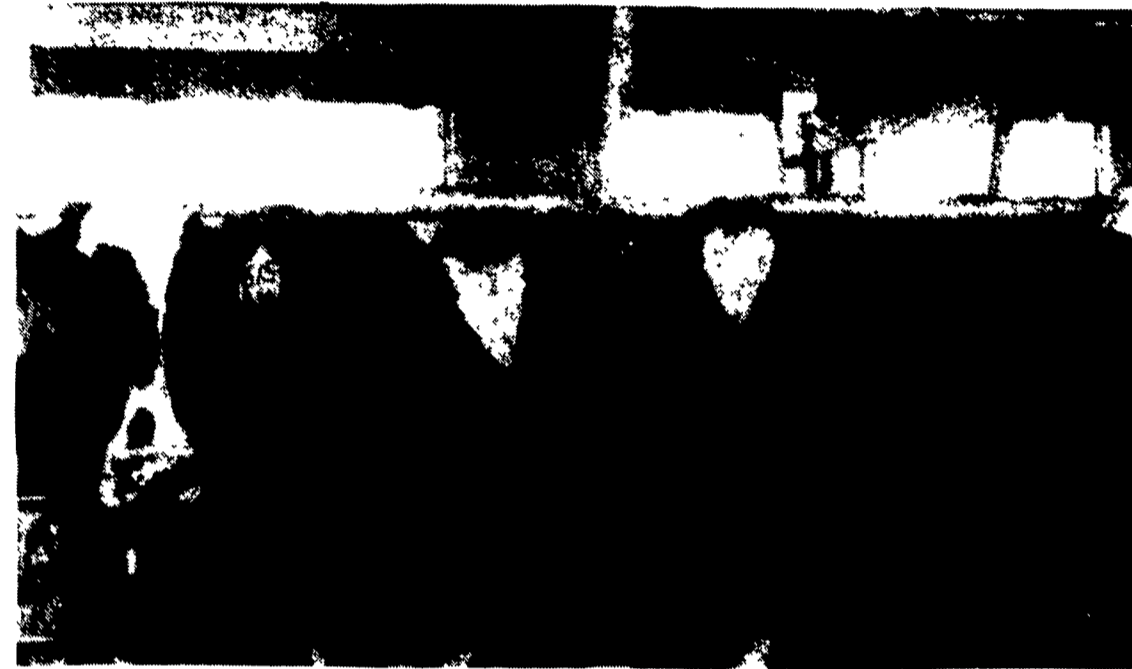
"It's nice and peaceful here," Andy said.

Jones said he expects his sons will be able to carry on the family business for at least another 35 years in Massey.

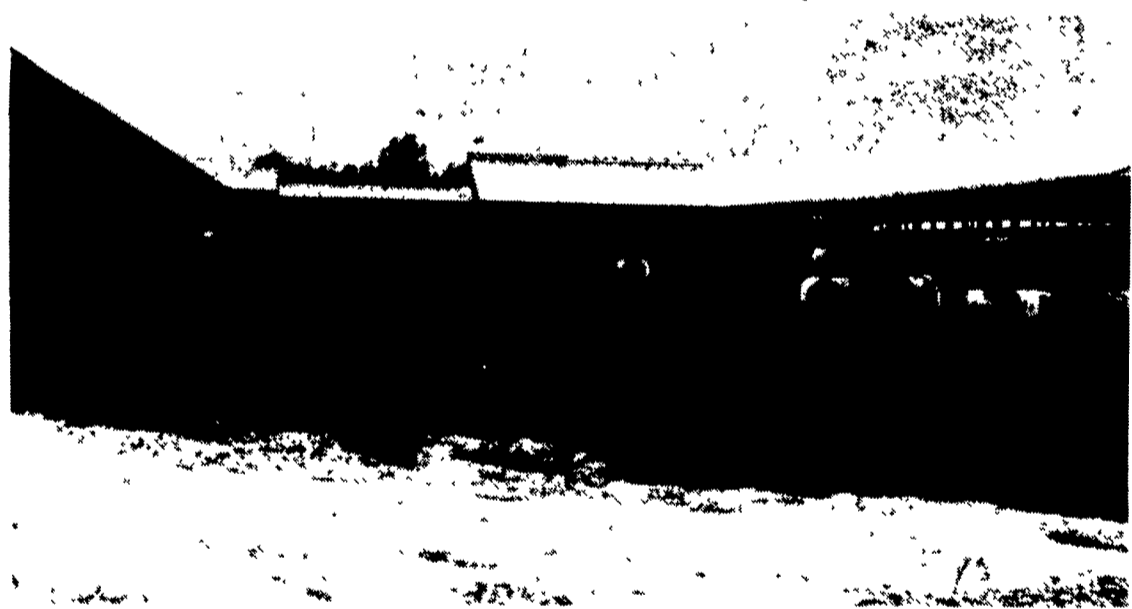
And that's much more of a chance than they had in New Jersey, he said.



The calf barn has room for 150 head.



The Jones' Holsteins line up for milking in the double-12 parallel parlor.



The pasture between the sheds is for "special needs" cows, that need to be closely monitored.



The loafing shed was placed so that prevailing winds provide natural ventilation for the cows.



Sean scrapes the alleys in the special needs barn. The alley scraper can't always carry away the amount of straw they like to bed with in the special box stalls.



David works on a pump. The Jones' depend on irrigation of 700 acres to make sure they get a consistent crop of corn.