

'The Sun, Rain, And The Increase'

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Also a big help on the farm is Pepper's grandson, Nate Wooster, who has helped him since he was a little boy.

"He's been following me around ever since he was big enough to walk," said Pepper, with a laugh.

On the farm, Pepper grows 110-125 acres of corn on his 420 rented and owned tillable acres. He also raises hay and

about 20 acres of oats.

Each year the Peppers harvest about 800 tons of corn silage and 190 tons of high moisture corn. The balance of the corn is placed in the crib.

"The high moisture corn is ground ear corn," said Pepper.

All the hay on the farm is baled in both square and round bales.

"We put up about 25,000 square bales and the rest of it we

round bale," he said.

The feed is put to use to nourish the 67 milking animals and 44 heifers kept on the farm. Currently the herd averages 17,500 pounds of milk which is shipped through Farmland Dairies.

In addition to the Holsteins, the Peppers used to keep several Percherons on the farm, hence the farm name, Holsteins and Horses. Although he sold his last horse recently, he admits he will probably get another some day.

"I was brought up in the horse era," said Pepper, "and it never leaves you. My grandfather used to say, 'There's something about the outside of a horse that's good for the inside of a man.'"

Born and raised in the area on a farm with his three brothers, Pepper purchased this farm in 1958 after renting it for two years. He and his wife, Janet, raised three children: Tom, who farms with his family in Roaring Branch; Deborah, who runs a store in the area with her family; and Michele, who, along with her family, recently stopped dairying.

As for the future of the farm, Pepper says it's up to his grandson, who is considering farming



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as a career.

"We're in the thinking process of doing something now.

We haven't committed ourselves yet, but we're going

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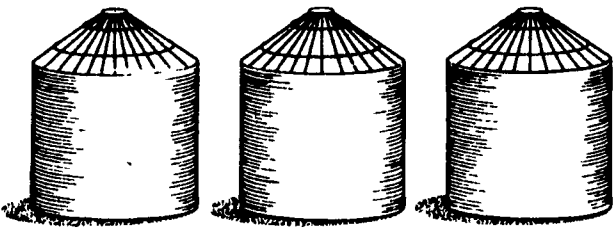


Tom Pepper proudly displays his plaque received for placing first in the three-year-average production class with the five-acre corn club. Pepper has been participating in the program since 1990.



Nate Wooster feeds a forkful of corn silage to the cows. Wooster, Tom Pepper's grandson has spent time on the farm since he was a little boy.

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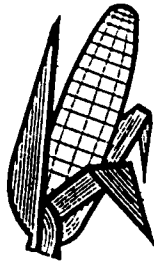
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