

Mt. Joy Cooperative Reports Good Year

EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) - Quoting increased milk production, increased membership, and decreased expenses, officials of the Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association pronounced the 1997 year excellent and successful. Figures released at the annual meeting Wednesday showed the cooperative had increased the pounds of milk shipped by 16 percent over the previous year, bringing the total to 298,510 pounds. Membership increased by 22 or 12 percent, and operating expenses declined by six cents per hundredweight or almost 10 percent.

The cooperative continues to redeem the revolving fund certificates of equity held by the patron members on a five-year rotating basis. The overall equity investment by the average patron is 11 percent less than the average four years ago.

The average milk price for the year was \$13.94, down from

\$15.22 last year but still third high of the last five years. In the final tenth month" check was \$13.14.

In 1993 operating expenses were 72 cents per hundred weight, but by this year expenses had been reduced to 61 cents per hundred weight.

Awards were presented to those members that had 12 consecutive month of quality premiums. They are George and Joe Rohrer, Strasburg; Leon Musser, Mt. Joy; Ira Heistand, Jr., Elizabethtown, and Glenn Barnhart, Palmyra.

Inspection honor roll recipients with 95 or better points for farm inspection, in addition to the premiums were: Christ Breneman, Manheim; Ken Balmer, Elizabethtown; Lawrence Good, Myerstown; Glenn Martin, Mohnton; price listing after deductions, the net farm price was \$13.13, the second highest in five years. The "third-Dave Harnish, Gap, and Leroy Hoover, Leola.

Their producers shipped over seven million pounds. They were Brubaker Farms, 9,802,656; Star



Among those who received honor roll awards at the Mt. Joy Farmers annual meeting are from left, Ira Heistand, Jr., Glenn Barnhart, Dave Harnish, Ken Balmer, Christ Breneman, and Leon Musser.

Rock Farms, 7,245,367; and John L. Landis, 7,212,689.

In the election of directors, Donald Risser, Elizabethtown, and Robert Brandt, Elizabethtown, were elected for three year terms. Donald Stoner, Landisville, was

elected to finish the unexpired term of Dale Hershey, who has been named to assist Earl Dehmey, with fieldman's duty.

The Mount Joy Cooperative currently markets milk for 201 dairy farms throughout South Central

Pennsylvania. They market milk exclusively through Dairylea Cooperative headquartered in Syracuse, New York. The milk is shipped to the local Kemps plant in Lancaster.

York Holstein Club Reorganizes

YORK (York Co.) — A spring barn meeting and tour are among several events in planning for members of the York County Holstein Association.

The association's board of directors has reorganized and begun scheduling the year's line-up of interesting and educational activities for members of the breed organization. Officers elected during the reorganization are Leroy Bupp, Seven Valleys, president; April Cooper, Delta, vice president; and June Boyer, York, secretary-treasurer. Frank Feeser, Hanover, is the club's state director. Other directors include Jenelle Boyer, Glen Rock; Ed Calhoun, Glen Rock; Cindy Hall, Airville; Dan Hushon, Delta; Roy Thompson, Wellsville; and Brad Walker, Thomasville.

Tentative plans include a March tour, possibly in conjunction with another county, is there is interest among the membership. An April

barn meeting is under consideration, to coincide with Holstein classification in the area, at a site to be announced.

Annual county show date is tentatively July 29, in conjunction with the 4-H summer dairy round-up, at the York Fairgrounds. A summer picnic is planned for August, at a host Holstein farm in the county.

York County members sold 32 cases of Cheddar cheese prior to the holidays, generating more than \$700 for work with youth, promotional and educational Holstein programs. Members of the York Holstein board elected to support youth work at the state level with a sponsorship of one of the youth show trophies at the All-American show in September.

York County Holstein members who have not yet paid their 1998 joint dues to the state and county associations are encouraged to send them as soon as possible.



York County Holstein Association's officers and board members for 1998 include, from left, front, April Cooper, vice president; Leroy Bupp, president; June Boyer, secretary-treasurer; and rear, directors Roy Thompson, Jenelle Boyer, Brad Walker, Frank Feeser and Dan Hushon.

Bonson's Awarded Friends of 4-H Plaque

GAIL STROCK

Mifflin Co. Correspondent
STRODES MILLS (Mifflin Co.) — Usually, organizations present awards to shakers and doers in the forefront. Usually, this time, however, the Mifflin County 4-H Junior Leaders awarded the Friends of 4-H plaque to a Mifflin County couple for their behind-the-scenes service since the 1960s! Neither Howard (Son) nor Betty Bonson has ever served directly as a 4-H club leader. But each has contributed greatly to the 4-H program.

The Bonsons accepted the Friends of 4-H Award at the Mifflin County 4-H Leaders' Recognition Banquet held at Hartman Center in Milroy in November. At their stone farmhouse in Strodes Mills near Lewistown, Son and Betty talked about 4-H and changes over the years.

"I've been involved with the youth fair since before our children were born," Son begins. Their daughter Rebecca is 34, son Mark is 31. "And I'm still

with it!"

He remembers in the 1960s when fair exhibits at Kish Park near Lewistown consisted mainly of capons, clothing, pigs, potatoes and poultry. Steers and dairy projects were added later.

In 1964, when the fair outgrew the Kish Park facilities, Reed Hayes donated land in Reedsville for the Mifflin County Youth Park. Son helped build the Mifflin County Youth Park buildings that year while "the women kept us fed!" Son has also served on the Mifflin County Youth Park Board since its inception. The first fair at the Youth Park took place in 1965.

Betty has been clerking the livestock sale for 32 years. Both she and Son have served on the Mifflin County Fair Board and have watched 4-H membership grow over the years.

"The livestock sale on Friday nights has been growing tremendously," comments Betty. "This year, it went from 6 until 11 p.m. We sold 13 rabbits, 10 goats, 51 sheep, 129 pigs and 47 beef for a total of nearly \$93,000.

The goats and rabbits were added just recently."

While Son and Betty have been watching 4-H grow over the decades, they've been watching other changes too, most of them favorable. They agree that newer clubs such as ceramics, archery, child care, photography and cake decorating give more choices to more children.

"Years ago, only farm kids joined 4-H," Son explains. "Now town children join. It's good. It gives them something to do. Very few 4-H kids get in trouble with the law."

One explanation may be that by joining 4-H, youth agree to abide by its rules and regulations. Participants must attend a specified number of meetings, complete a project and project book, or they don't show. And because of these club requirements, one thing has never changed. 4-H still teaches responsibility.

It's good to see 4-H'ers develop into responsible citizens," Betty reflects.

The Bonsons agree that Mifflin County 4-H programs have a good group of leaders, although more are always needed.

Son and Betty began dairy

farming in 1946 on a 160-acre farm purchased from her parents. Son started breeding cows part time in 1945. In 1967, he left dairying to breed cows full time. He became Mifflin County's Dog Law Enforcement Officer from 1980 until 1995. They rent the land and dairy facilities to the Lee D. and Joanne Yoder family. Together with Yoders, the Bonson farm received the Mifflin County Soil

Conservation Cooperator of the Year Award in 1993 and the Goodyear Award in 1994.

Betty began clerking in the assessment office at the Mifflin County Courthouse in 1975. She helped with payroll and then became Assistant Chief Clerk in addition to her payroll responsibilities. She retired this past July. She and Son enjoy going to all of the Penn State home games and to public sales.



Son and Betty Bonson stand in front of a painting of their farm near Strodes Mills. They're holding the Friends of 4-H Award given to them by the Mifflin County Junior Leaders.