

Maryland Hall Of Fame Award Is Great Honor

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Lancaster Farming Staff
RINGGOLD, Md. — A tributary to Antietam Creek courses through Misty Meadow Farm in Maryland's northern region of Washington County.

In the mornings, especially in spring and fall, the moisture in the air above the fenced stream in the 24-acre pasture condenses into a "steam," creating an eerily romantic softness of mist and mystery.

Hence the name of the 440-acre family dairy farm owned and operated by John and Betty Herbst and son David and his family.

In February the Herbst family were inducted into the Maryland Agricultural Hall of Fame.

They received the honor from Maryland Gov. Paris Glendening during the state's annual Agriculture Dinner in Annapolis, the state capital.

While Gov. Glendening took the opportunity to talk about controlling nutrient runoff from agricultural land, John Herbst said later the honor was very well received by his family.

"When your peers tell you, 'You did a good job,' I feel it's just a great honor," John said. "It's about as great an honor as you can get from being a farmer. It tells you that you must have done something right along the way."

The Maryland Hall of Fame is

housed in the state's Department of Agriculture Building in Annapolis, where plaques and photographs of the winners, including the 14 previous inductees, are to be permanently showcased.

In a news release about the award presentation from Gov. Glendening's office, the governor stated, "The family we inducted into the Maryland Agricultural Hall of Fame really represents what Maryland is all about. My goal as Maryland's governor is to make Maryland a place where families like the Herbsts have room to thrive and prosper. I want to ensure a bright future for them and their children.

"That is why we are working with farmers, watermen, representatives of the seafood and poultry industries, environmentalists and concerned citizens throughout Maryland to reduce the flow of nutrients into Maryland's streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, while at the same time expanding economic opportunities for all sectors of our state's agricultural industry," he said.

Lewis Riley, former state agriculture secretary, participated in the ceremonies.

To John Herbst's understanding, the award is presented based on soil and water conservation, environmentally sound farming practices, and community service.



After running down the line with the ration mixer wagon and allowing for the inevitable spreading out of food, David Herbst pushes the milking herd's TMR back closer to the cows. David handles the milking herd, while father John takes care of field work, though efforts are shared when necessary. The herd averages about 21,000 pounds of milk on a hybrid milking schedule, closer to 3 times per day.

Misty Meadow Farm has implemented many conservation practices, especially on some of the land that was added to the farm after purchasing an abused, deeply gullied and eroded tenant farm.

John said some of the eroded cuts into a sidehill field were too

deep to attempt a crossing with a tractor.

Also, John has served on committees and as vice president of the Maryland Farm Bureau to help improve planning and procedure. His volunteer leadership on various boards and committees was

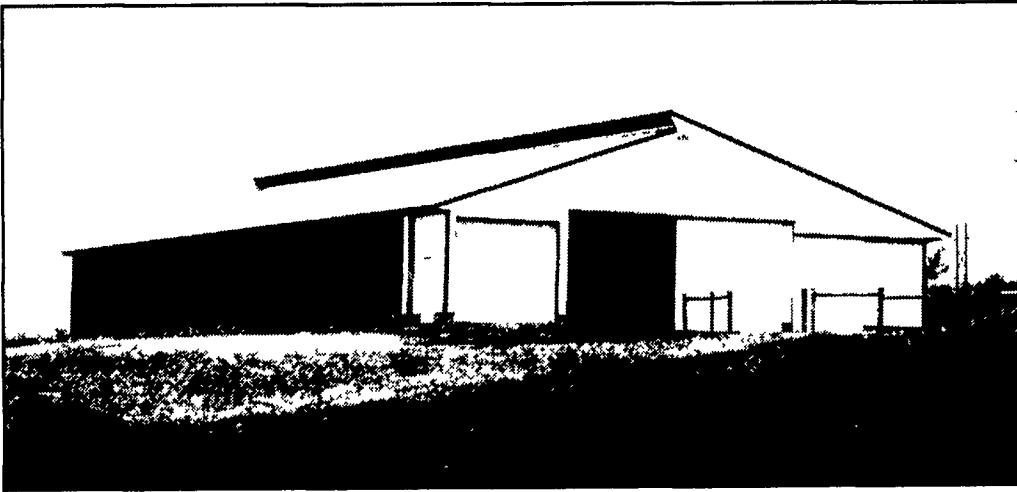
also considered.

In the news release, it states the Hall of Fame was started in 1991 to honor "... farm families in the agricultural industry who exemplify high standards of achievement and commitment to the community."

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